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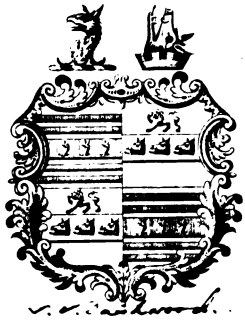

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Or AN Henderson

EXPOSITION

By way of Supplement,

ON THE

Fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth Chapters of the Prophecy

OF

AMOS.

Where you have the Text fully explained, other Texts occasionally cleared, many Cases Stated, many Practical Observations raised, and many Polemical Points debated: Together

With a Confutation of { Dr. *Homes*, and Sir *Henry Vane*, } In the end of the Commentary.

By *THO. HALL*, B.D. and Pastor of *Kings-norton*.

O that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of way-faring men, that I might leave my people, and go from them, for they be all Adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men. Jer. 9. 2.

They bend their tongue like their bow for lyes, but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth, for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not mee, saith the Lord. Verse 3.

LONDON, Printed for *Henry Mortlock*, at the Phœnix in St. *Pauls* Church-yard near the Little North-door. 1661.

101. f. 80.

BIBLIOTHECA · BODLEIANA ·

Ornatißimo Viro, amico amicißimo, Ecclesiæ Pastorumq; fidelium Patrono notißimo, Orthodoxæ fidei propugnatori acerrimo,

Gervasio Piggot de Thrumpton in Comitatu Nottingham. Armigero:

TAm à Romanistarum fæce ac Scabie; quàm à Fanaticorum Spuma ac rabie, liberrimo:

Qui Natales eruditione, Eruditionem virtute, Virtutem moribus usque quáque nobilibus adornavit:

Cui medulla inest & Quintessentia Pietatis, Poesios, Philosophiæ ac Theologiæ:

Lucubrationes hasce quales, quales, Amoris & Honoris ergô. *D. D. D.*

THO. HALL.

June the 13 1781
Martha Hawarth Departed
this Life in the 55 year of
Her age

TO THE READER.

IN my Exposition on Hosea, I had occasion to consult the Prophet Amos, who was Hosea's Contemporary; and finding that Dr. Benefield, Lady-Margaret-Professor in Oxford, had commented on that Prophecy; upon perusal I found that hee had expounded onely the three first Chapters; whereupon, I finding the fourth to bee very suitable to our times, I onely set upon that, not intending to go any further; for the clouds thickned so fast over us, that I despaired of proceeding to another Chapter; but being incouraged by some to go on with so useful a work begun, I made a further Essay, and by a good hand of providence, have brought the work (totally beyond my own expectation) to a total perfection, having finisht the Exposition of the whole Prophecy.

Many Posthumous works have had Supplementators surpassing their Predecessors, this cannot bee expected here. All that I can promise thee is this, that I have not baulkt any doubt or difficulty

ficulty, but have as fully and faithfully explained the Text as possibly I could; I have spared for no cost or pains, I have spent both Purse and Person freely in the work. 'Tis for the Lord, and I have not offered to him of that which cost mee nothing.

I have studied brevity, the times will not bear long discourses, besides I naturally affect brevity, and love to see much matter compact together in a little room.

Here thou hast Practicals, Polemicals, References, and what ever else might compleat the work.

Here wee have a Glass wherein wee may see the Misery of Security, the Downfall of Sensuality and Idolatry, the Sword, Plague and Famine pursuing an obstinate and incurable people to destruction. Here wee have the sins that ruined Israel, viz. Oppression and Cruelty, *Amos* 2.8. *and* 8.6,7. Bribery, *Amos* 4.1. *and* 5.12. *Notorious* Lust, *Amos* 2.7. *Odious* Ingratitude, *Amos* 2,9,10,11,12, 13. *Wilful* Ignorance, *Amos* 3.10. Hating of Reproof, *Amos* 5.10,13. Formality, *and a Ceremonious Religion*, Amos 5.21,22. Unrighteousness *in dealing*, Amos 8.5. *And* Weariness *of Gods worship*, Amos 8.5. *And if these be* Englands *sins, these will be likewise* Englands *ruine. Parity of sin will bring parity in suffering. All the Symptomes of Judgements approaching are*

upon

upon the Land. 1 *Good men fall,* Psa. 12. 1. Isa. 57. 1. 2 *Ill men rise,* 2 Chron. 19. 2. Psal. 12. ult. 3 *Gods Vine, the Church, is grown wilde and luxuriant for want of pruning; Professors are turned Blasphemers, and instead of the Grapes of Obedience, they bring forth the wilde Grapes of Apostacy, Idolatry, Security, Pride and Hypocrisie. Wee grow weary of Mannah, and long to be at our Garlick and Leeks, and Onions in* Egypt *again. It was the great sin of* Israel, *that when the Lord had brought them out of* Egyptian *bondage into* Canaan, *yet then they cryed,* Come let us make us a Captain, that so wee may return into Egypt again, Numb. 14. 4. *Such horrid Apostacy alwaies ends in misery,* Isa. 1. 4, 7. Ezek. 9. 9. Heb. 10. 38. *Besides, the sad divisions and subdivisions which are amongst us fore-tell some approaching Judgement. Wee cannot gratifie Antichrist more, than to weaken our selves by our divisions.* England *is like a great Animal (as the Duke of* Rohan *hath well observed) and cannot dye unless she help to kill her self.* Like *a Diamond, she is not so easily broken with hammers and swords, as she is cut in peeces with her own dust. 'Twas our divisions at first that brought in the* Romans, Normans, *and* Saxons *into this Land; what they may do again, a little time will shew.*

Many

Many amongst us have run round to Popery; and therefore 'tis just with God to make that the scourge, which so many have made their refuge; and after the Rod hath done its work, then bee'l burn it; God is letting Antichrist loose once more, to hasten his fall; the more blood he sheds, the greater will the cry be against him. The measure of Babylons *sins will be made up in blood before her final ruine; and when she shall have once more filled her self with the blood of the Saints, she shall have blood given her to drink, for she is worthy.*

The good Lord awaken us, and humble us all for our own sins, and for the sins of the times we live in, and make us to mourn for the things wee cannot mend, and inable us to receive the Truth in the love of it, and make us at last to serve him with gladness of heart, in the abundance of all things, that wee may not provoke him to make us serve our enemies in want and misery. This is, and shall bee the prayer of

Kingsn. July 25. 1661.

Thy Servant in the Lord,

THO. HALL.

AN

Israels Obstinacy.

A COMMENTARY ON The fourth Chapter of *Amos*.

AMOS 4. 1.

Hear this word yee Kine of Bashan, *that are in the mountains of* Samaria, *which oppress the poor, which crush [or destroy] the needy, which say to their Masters, bring and let us drink.*

THis Chapter contains the summe of the *Third Sermon* which the Prophet *Amos* made to *Israel*, wherein he exhorts them to Repentance; and because by nature we are very averse and backward to this duty,

1 He sets before them their hainous and hideous Sins, which for number and nature were very great and grievous.

2 He rehearseth the Judgements which they had already endured, and tells them of greater Judgements which would follow, unless by speedy repentance they did prevent them.

3 He sets before them the *Goodness*, and the *Greatness* of God, the better to draw and drive them home unto him.

1 He sets before them his *Goodness*, viz. he was their God in Covenant still, ready to receive them to mercy upon their returning to him.

2 His *Greatness* (*vers.* 13.) he forms the Mountains, and

creates the Winds, &c. and can with ease destroy such as rebell against him.

The Prophet had before reproved the Rulers, and people in general for their Idolatry, Carnal security, Ingratitude, and Apostacy; now he comes to reprove the Counsellours and Rulers of the Kingdom of *Israel* in particular; for their oppression and cruelty, for their Epicurism, and beastly kind of life, *vers.* 1. *Hear this word yee Kine of Bashan.* This is the Prophets *exordium* and *Preface*, wherein he calls for attention, both in respect of the *Persons* he speaks to, and the matter he treats of, *viz.* the Sins of the Rulers and People.

2 We have the Judgements denounced against them for those Sins, set forth by a double Metaphor, *ver.* 2, 3.

3 Here is the confirmation of this threatning. 1. By the Oath of God, *I have sworn by my Holiness, saith the Lord*, that I will bring evil upon them; and secondly, their Sins have justly deserved it: for 1. They are a People given up to Idolatry, and hypocritical worshipping of me, *vers.* 4, 5. 2. They were indurate, impenitent, and incorrigible under variety of former judgements, *vers.* 6, to 12. The Prophet names Six.

1 *Famine*, I gave them cleanness of teeth, &c. *ver.* 6.
2 *Drought*, I will hold the rain from them, *ver.* 7, 8.
3 *Blasting*, Mildew, and the Palmer-worm, *ver.* 9.
4 *The Pestilence*, ver. 10.
5 *The Sword*, ver. 10.
6 *Terrible Destruction*, ver. 11.

4 Here is the unhappy success of all these dispensations of God towards them, which is annext to every particular Judgement, as a *Versus intercalaris*, the burden of this mournful complaint, *Yet have yee not returned unto me saith the Lord*, *vers.* 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

5 Seeing their incorrigibleness, the Prophet goeth on to denounce a sorer and sharper Judgement than any yet had befaln them, *vers.* 12. *Therefore thus will I doe to thee O Israel.* The Judgement was so dreadful that the Prophet seems unable to express it, and therefore he doth as 'twere draw a Vail over what he could not in words express: with a *Thus will I doe unto thee*; q. d. since nothing will move thee, I will bring upon thee some direful desolation, and utter destruction,

destruction, for so it follows, *Chap.* 8. 14. *They shall fall and never rise up again.*

6 He concludes the Chapter with an Exhortation to Repentance, calling upon them to prepare to meet the Lord, by unfeigned Humiliation, and Reformation, that so they might prevent those Judgements which were yet coming upon them, *vers.* 12.

7 The better to awaken them he useth two Motives, the first is drawn from the dreadfulness of the impending Judgements, which since they were not able to resist, hee exhorts them to prevent, considering also the advantage they had of a Covenant yet in being betwixt God and them, *ver.* 12. The second is drawn from the Majesty and Power of God, who was marching in wrath against them.

In the first Verse the Prophet prosecutes the Charge which hee had begun (*Chap.* 3. 9, 10.) against the Rulers and Judges of *Israel*, for their cruelty in oppressing the poor and needy. These usually are ringleaders in sin, their examples incourage others in wickedness, and therefore the Prophet begins his Charge against them; and after descends to the Priests and People, who were confederate with them in their wickedness. Here we have

1 The Summons, *Hear this word.*

2 *Who* must hear? The Rulers of *Israel*, whom for their effeminacy he calls, *Kine of Bashan.*

3 Where doe they dwell? *In the mountain of Samaria.* This was the Metropolis and chief City of *Israel*, situate upon a Mountain; here was the Kings Palace where these Courtiers resided.

4 What doe they doe there?

Why they { Oppress the Poor. They crush the Needy. They call for drink.

Before he had described them darkly, and figuratively, calling them unruly Kine, but now he tells them plainly and punctually what they are, they are full fed Beasts, that goared their fellows, and trampled the poor under their feet:

5 But what said the Lord to all this? Why he swears *by his Holiness* that they shall dearly pay for this their cruelty, *vers.* 2.

So much shall suffice for the *Logical* Analysis, and resolution of the words, I come now to the *Grammatical* explication of them.

Hear this word, viz. of the Lord, as it is explained, *chap.* 3. 1. *q. d.* I come not to you in mine own name, or in the name of men, but I come to you in Gods name, it is his Message that I bring to you, and therefore justly calls for their best attention and obedience, the Original implieth both. *Hear this word*, 'tis emphatical in the Original, for the Article is doubled, *q. d.* Hear this word which the most true and eternal God (all whose words are works) hath spoken against you, and hear what hee hath decreed to bring upon you.

Shimgnu, audita, a shamang, audivit. obedivit. Gen. 3. 17. *Haddavaer Hazzeh, hoc verbum, hoc ipsum.*

Yee Kine of Bashan. Thus he calls these wicked, wealthy, wanton Rulers, who managed the affairs of the Kingdom for the King, and did abuse their power to the oppressing of the poor; those feasted and fatted themselves with the spoyls of the poor whom they oppreſt in judgement; and therefore the Prophet calls them not men, but Beasts, and fat Bawsons, whose hearts were fat as grease: and their eyes star'd out with fatness; they were stupid, and therefore he useth sharp expressions, the better to awaken them; he speaks to them in the feminine Gender (not because they were Women, as some conceive, for the sins which he reproves are more proper to men, especially the Rulers of a People) but because of their effeminate, wanton condition, being given to their bellies, therefore he calls them in his Herdsmans Dialect, * *Cowes*; not Oxen or Horses which Plow and labour for us, but lazy lascivious Cowes and Heifers which were put into rich Pastures to fill and fat them the sooner for the slaughter. They were like to fat, unruly, refractory Heifers which could endure no yoke. 'Tis usual in Scripture to call such idle, effeminate, loose persons, by the name of Females, *Isa.* 3. 12. *Revel.* 17. 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 18.

Metaphoricè designat eos qui opibus & potentiâ pollebant in regno Samariæ, ac præcipue consiliarii, Judices, præfecti. Paræus in locum.

* *Hoc nomen recte in eos convenit, quoniam ventri tantum & delitiis indulgebant quasi significat eos non agriculturæ, sed immolationi & esui esse præparatos, i. e. occasioni & captivitati. Hierom.*

7, 9, 18. such wealthy wicked men are elsewhere called, fat *Bulls*, and *Bulls of Bashan*, for their fierceness and cruelty, *Psal.* 22. 12. *Jer.* 50. 11. *Hos.* 4. 16. & 10. 11.

2 He calls them Kine of *Bashan*, because of the plenty of fat Cowes, and rich Pastures in that Country; hence we read of the fatlings of *Bashan*, Ezek. 39. 18. and Rams of the brood of *Bashan*, Deut. 32. 14. now the Rulers of *Samaria* were like the Kine of *Bashan*, loaded with fatness, secure and drunken with worldly wealth and pleasures, insomuch as they sleighted the Word of God, and contemned the Prophets which publisht it unto them, and so became like fat Beasts fitted for the slaughter.

Caution. The Lord doth not here simply condemn them for their Riches (which are blessings simply considered in themselves) but for the abuse of their riches and power. 1. In getting wealth by extortion and indirect practises. 2. For abusing them to the Oppression of the poor.

Q. Are we not forbidden to revile the Rulers of the People, and commanded to give no offence to any, and therefore Paul *became all things to all men that hee might win them*, 2 Cor. 10. 32, 33.

Ans. 1. We are forbidden *reviling* of Rulers, (*Exod.* 22. 28. *Eccles.* 10. 20. *Acts* 13. 5.) but never *reproving* of them, neither is this an offence *given*, but unjustly *taken* by them. 2. We must distinguish between private reproaches, and Prophetical reproofs; for a Minister in the name of the Lord to reprove men for their open enormities is no rayling, nor reviling, but a faithful discharge of that duty which God hath intrusted them with, and strictly under severe penalties enjoyned them, *Isa.* 58. 2. *Ezek.* 3. 33. 1 *Tim.* 5. 20. and all the Prophets, with Christ and his Apostles, did practice it. Now *Amos* was a Prophet of God, and so by vertue of his Office might doe that which a private person who wants that Call, may not doe; besides, he being called extraordinarily, he had an extraordinary measure of the Spirit, hee knew the projects and practises of these ungodly great ones, and so might the more boldly reprove them. Hence *David* calls wicked men *Doggs*, *Lions*, *Bulls*, Psal. 22. 12, 13. 21. 22. and *Solomon* his Son calls wicked Princes hungry Bears, *Prov.* 28. 15. and *Paul* calls *Nero* a *Lion*, and Christ calls *Herod* a

Fox, and *Amos* here calls them fatted *Cows*. This downright Prophet being not bred at Court, nor coming from the *Hall*, where men use silken words, and lofty titles of Honour; but coming from the *Stall*, according to his blunt and rustick language, he calls a Spade a Spade, and such as neglected their duties to pamper their Carkasses, he calls Beasts, not men; *q. d.* their flatterers look upon them as so many Heroes, and Gods on earth, but I that have seen their loathsome lusts, doe look upon them as so many fat Bulls, filthy Swine, and unruly Heifers, that will not bear the yoke of God.

3 To that of the Apostle, in becoming all things to all men; 1. It was in all lawful things, and such as tended to the edification, and not to the destruction of any, 2. It was only in such things as are left indifferent by the Word of God, and in this sence only the Apostle became all things to all men, (1 *Cor.* 9. 19, 20, 21, 22.) amongst the Gentiles hee walks, as one that was not under the Ceremonial Law, that he might win them, *Acts* 15. 19, 20. and amongst the *Jewes* he observed the Ceremonial Law, that hee might not offend them, *Acts* 16. 3. & 18. 18.

4 It is the favour of men which is gained by flattering and unlawful means, which the Scripture condemns, *Gal.* 1. 10. *Doe I seek to please men? then should I not bee the Servant of Christ*; the Interrogation is a strong Negation, *q. d.* when I was a Pharisee I pleased men, and followed their Traditions, but now I desire in singleness of heart to approve my self to God.

5 When the favour of men is sought in the first place, this cannot stand with sincerity, but when it is cast in upon us after a faithful discharge of our duty, wee may thankfully and joyfully receive it. It is said of Christ that he grew in favour first with *God*, and then with *men*, Luke 2. 52. and it was *Demetrius* his Honour, that *he had a good report of all men, yea and of the truth it self*, 3 Joh. 12. It is possible for a Christian so to live that he may approve himself both to God and man; Christ walked so convincingly, that the Pharisees complained, that *all the world went after him*, (Joh. 12. 19.) and no wonder, since all the world was made by him; it is prudence therefore for a Minister so to live, and so to act, that if

if it be possible (without detriment to the truth, and a good conscience) he may have peace with all men. A free, sincere, and prudent discharge of his duty is the only way to obtain this.

Who oppress the poor, and crush or bruise the needy; *q. d.* By * force and fraud you oppress them, and by your might and power you break and bruise those that have no helper. This is their daily practice, and constant trade, as the † Participle of the Present Tense, implies. Great Men many times are great Oppressors of the poor, which cannot help themselves against them. No doubt but they abused the rich by their Bribery and injustice, yet since the rich have many friends, but the poor is hated usually by his nearest relations, therefore they exercise their cruelty on them who have no helper.

* *Guashak, oppressit vi & dolo. v. Leigh. Critica. S. p. 182*

† *Opprimentes pauperes, accidentes egenos. Montan.*

Rattati, confringitis ac conquassatis egentes vestra potentia, insignem denotat violentiam rapacitate conjunctam. Tarnovius in locum. See more in my Comment. on *Psalm* 82. 2. p. 105, 106, 108.

Which say to their Masters, bring, and let us drink. Those corrupt Rulers thought it not enough that themselves oppressed the poor, but they incouraged such as had authority over the People to fleece and flay them, that they might make merry together with their spoyls. They call on their Comrades to adde affliction to the afflicted, and to oppress the oppressed, which is such gross inhumanity, and horrid cruelty, that the Lord swears in the next verse, that he will not pardon it.

Mali principes quid aliud faciunt quam intimos suos, qui merito Domini eorum sunt, quos conciliis suis regunt, exhorturi, ut spolient populum, ut ipse bibant suarum alimenta voluptatum? Hos recte Homerus δημοβόρους *appellat, i. e. populi devoratores. Ribera in locum.*

They say to their *Masters*, or *Lords* of the poor, that is, to such as have the mastery over them, *viz.* their rich Creditors, and Usurers, who have and keep them under as their Slaves and Vassals; these Rulers say unto them, *Bring, that we may drink*; that is, bring in Money and Presents, bring bribes and rewards that we may make merry, drink wine, and * feast with the prey and spoyls of the poor. Thus they claw

Adonehem, Dominis suis, i. e. potentioribus qui sunt Domini pauperum.

Dominos appellat hic exactores, quibus scil. pauperes eiant obnoxiati. Calvin. * *Shatch, bibit, convivatus est, quia in convivio largitur bibi solet. Summam impudentiam notat, quod non modo quavis munera spente oblata recipiant; verum etiam ille sibi offerri petulent; & quidem non in alium usum quam ut potandi & vorandi materia sufficiat. Gualter in locum.*

one

one another in their wickedness, saying, Bring but Money and yee shall have what yee will, especially against the poor and needy, we will deliver them into your hands, doe you pick their bones, suck their blood, and use them as you please; only bring and bribe well and you may have any thing at our hands against them. At feasts they were wont to drink freely, *Ad hilaritatem non ad ebrietatem*, for cheerfulness, not excess, (*Gen.* 43. 34. *Cant.* 5. 1. *Job.* 2. 10.) and therefore by a Synecdoche, *Drinking* is put here for *Feasting*, where there is both eating and drinking, yet because drinking of Wine was much used in feasting, therefore in Scripture it is oft put for feasting; as *Isa.* 5. 11. *Joel* 1. 5. *Amos* 6. 6. hence the Greeks called their Feasts, *Symposia, compotationes*, not eatings, but drinkings.

1 *God wants not Instruments to doe his work*; if he will have a people taught, he can raise up *Amos* an Herdsman to reprove a bruitish people; yea by an *Asse* hee can reprove the madness of a *Balaam*, 2 Pet. 2. 16. Hee usually chuseth *the things that are not*, viz. of any esteem in the eyes of carnal men, to confound the things which are of high esteem amongst them, 1 *Cor.* 1. 27, 28, 29. 1 *Sam.* 2. 6, 7, 8. *Psal.* 8. 2. & 78. 70, 71. *Matth.* 4. 18.

Caution, not that this gives liberty for every one that supposeth himself Gifted to Preach without any Call; for though *Amos* were an Herdsman, yet he was both gifted and called extraordinarily by God, as appears, *Amos* 7. 15. *The Lord took me as I followed the flock, and said to me, Goe, Prophesie unto my people Israel.* Here is his Call, and he shewed his extraordinary Call, by his extraordinary gifts; whereas those Enthusiasts amongst us, who pretend to an extraordinary Call, upon trial are found not to have ordinary gifts; they can hardly write one line of true English.

2 *Obs. It is lawful sometime to use a Preface, the better to quicken attention.* We are by nature dull and slow to beleeve, or practice the truthes of God, and therefore we had need of all good means to quicken us. But of this * elsewhere.

* See my Comment. on Psal. 82. 1. p. 9, 10.

3 *Obs. Ministers must Preach the Word of God to the people.* They must not preach their own Fancies, or mens Inventions, but they must publish Gods Counsels, teaching men to observe whatsoever he commands them, *Matth.* 28. 20.

1 *Cor.*

1 Cor. 11. 23. *De Deo nil sine Deo*, we must doe nothing in Gods Worship without the warrant of his Word; all must be done according to Gods pattern, without adding or detracting, *Deut.* 12. *ult. Prov.* 30. 6. Hence it is that all the Prophets (as *Amos* doth here) came with a *Dixit Dominus*, *Thus saith the Lord, and, Hear the Word of the Lord*, Ezek. 1. 3. Hos. 1. 1. Jonah 1. 1. Micah 1. 1. Zech. 1. 2. Mal. 1. 1. Hee that preacheth to Gods people must publish his Oracles to them, 1 *Pet.* 4. 11. such a man may preach with power and authority. It is this Word of God which Gods people must *read*, Deut. 6. 6, 7. this they must *search* into, *Joh.* 5. 39. this they must *meditate* on, *Psal.* 1. 2. and this they must *practise*, Joh. 13. 17. and therefore great reason that this, and this Word only they should hear.

See this Point excellently inlarged, and all superstitious cavils answered, by Master *Attersol*, on Numb. 3. 4. p. 137. to 143. & p. 167

1 Away then with those Atheistical Sectaries who contemn Gods Word, and prefer their own brainsick Revelations. Raptures, New Lights, and Satanical delusions before the pure and perfect Word of God, These are not of God, because they reject his Word, 1 *Joh.* 4. 6. these follow lying Vanities, and so forsake their own Mercies; they reject the Law, which shewes they have no light in them, *Isa.* 8. 20.

Those Ministers then are to be blamed: that instead of saying with *Amos*, *Hear the Word of the Lord*, they cry, Hear what *Aristotle*, *Tully*, *Plato*, *Plutarch*, *Pindarus*, *Seneca*, say; how oft doe they cry, Thus saith *Austin*, and thus saith *Ambrose*, when it may be they never once saw; much less perused those Authors, only they name them to get a name for Learned men, when indeed it is a very poor peice of learning to get a few fragments, and scraps of Latine in that kind together. Wee are Gods Embassadours, and must keep close to our Commission; and though we may * occasionally (as the Apostle did) and sparingly cite Heathens to convince them out of their own VWriters, or else to shame Christians that come short of them; yet we may in no wise make it our constant practise.

* See my Schools Guard, ch. 3. p. 48.

4 Obs. *Gods Ministers who are sent by him, must plainly tell even great men of their sins*; so doth *Amos* here, he sleights the sinful greatness of men, and emboldens himself upon his authority and calling, Though they were fat and full, high and haughty, yet he tells them to their faces, that they acted

rather like Beasts, than men, and should dearly pay for their cruelty. It is true, poor men must be reproved when they sin, but rich men especially, because the sins of great men are great sins, and by their example they doe much hurt to others. Hence *Samuel* reproves *Saul*, and the man of God reproves *Jeroboam* for usurping, and intermedling with the Priests Office, which belonged not unto him, 1 *King*. 13. 1, 2, &c. Their falls are not only *Personal*, but *Epidemical*, and teach general disobedience, as they complained of Queen *Vashti*, that her disloyalty would make others disloyal, *Hest*. 1. 16, 17. It is in the body Politick, as in the body Natural, if the Vitals be poysoned, the inferiour parts cannot bee free; each Vein, and Nerve, and Artery, like the flowing streams of some polluted Springs, are receptacles of their infection, as well as nature. Let *Jeroboam* but set up Calves, and all *Israel* is presently upon their knees to them. How many silly people by following their Rulers have run themselves into destruction; like the Prince of *Frisland*, who asking what became of his Progenitors and Friends that were dead in their ignorance and error? Answer was made, That they were in Hell; hee desperately replied, that then hee would goe thither after them. Subjects are ambitious to follow their Princes, Tenants their Landlords, and Servants their Masters, though they forsake God to doe it. It was none of the worst counsel which the good Judge in *Lucian* gave to *Sostratus* when he released him; *Beegood* (saith hee) *and see thou teach not thy offence to others*; for there are some who doe at once, in the very same act, both commit and teach sin, and so to the numberless number of their own transgressions, adde the sins of thousands.

See more in my Comment, on Psal. 82. 2. Obs. 1. p. 96, 97.

V. Munsters Cosmograph in *Frisland*.

Yee Kine of Bashan.

5 Obs. *Wicked men are brutish men.* Their prosperity and pomp besots them, *Jer*. 5. 5. 21. it fills them with insolence and blasphemy (*Psal*. 73. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.) and debaseth them beneath the beasts that perish, *Psal*. 49. 20. because they *have no changes, therefore they fear not God*; because they are not emptied from vessel to vessel, but they live secure and at ease, therefore their scent abides within them, *Jer*. 48. 11. Hence it is that they are so oft compared in Scripture to Bulls, Bears, Doggs, Swine, &c. as I have else where shewed at large.

In my Comment. on Psal. 73. 22. Obs. 6. and on Psal. 82. 4. Obs. 6.

That dwell in the Mountain of Samaria.

6 Obs. *God takes notice of the dwellings of men.* He knows where his enemies dwell, *Obadiah* 3. and he knows where his people dwell, *Ezek.* 26. *Zech.* 2. 7. *Revel.* 2, 13. he knows our * names, our natures, our callings and conditions, *Act.* 16. 14, 15, yea not only our integral parts, but even the hairs of our head are numbred by him, *Mat.* 10. 30. He sees us though wesee not him, *John* 1. 47. and knowes us by our names before we have a being; *Josiah* was called by his name three hundred years before hee was born, 1 *King.* 23. 2.

* See this point largely handled, in *Attersol*, on Numb. 1. 6. Doct. 2. p. 20. to 28.

God hath a particular and distinct knowledge of every man and woman in the world: hee perfectly knowes all things past, present, and to come, (*Acts* 15. 18.) and that not successively and by discourse, by debating and searching out the causes of things, but in a moment, by one eternal act of understanding he knoweth all things, with their causes and conditions, in himself, and of himself, without any reasoning or help from others, what was done, or is to be done a thousand years hence, is as present with him as a thing that is past, *Psal.* 90. 4. Hee calls the things that are not as if they were, *Rom.* 14. 17. and knew *Jeremy* before he was formed in the Womb, and ordained him to be a Prophet, *Jer.* 1. 5. Gods knowledge is infinite, and eternal, like himself; our knowledge is dark, imperfect, uncertain, confused; but Gods knowledge of us, and ours, is an absolute, perfect, clear, certain, distinct knowledge; we know the outside and superficies of things, but God searcheth the heart, and knowes not only our faces, but our spirits (1 *Sam.* 16. 7. *Jer.* 17. 9, 10.) all things are naked and anatomized before him, *Job* 34. 21, 22. *Heb.* 4. 13.

How careful then should we be, to walk in the midst of our houses with perfect hearts, (*Psal.* 101. 2.) since Gods eyes are upon our habitations, and he sees our walking there. This should make us dedicate our houses to the service of God, (*Psal.* 30, the title of the Psalm, 2 *Sam.* 6. 20.) that so they may be *Bethels*, houses of God, and not *Betha-vens*, houses of vanity and iniquity. Wee should put away sin farre from our Tents and Tabernacles, that the eyes of Gods jealousie may see nothing amongst us to displease him, *Job* 22. 23

see the benefit, *v.* 24. to 30. Let the name of our dwellings be, *Jehovah Shammah, the Lord is there*: Ezek. *ult. ult.* let not idleness, ryot, and prophaneness dwell there, but let the glory of the Lord, and his fear dwell there; let it bee said of your houses as *Hagar* said of her VVell (*Gen.* 16. 14.) Beer-la-hai-roi, *the Well of him that lives and sees me.* So say thou, Beth-la-hai-roi, The house and dwelling of him that lives and sees me. Wee shall never bee sincere till wee can walk as in Gods eye continually, as *Enoch* and *Abraham* did, *Gen.* 5. 24. & 17. 1. & 24. 40.

7 Obs. *Great men many times are great Oppressors:* It is these fat Cowes of *Bashan* that goar their fellows. Riches accidentally make men cruel and insolent; it were rich men that oppreſt the poor, and drew them by violence before Judgement Seats, *Jam.* 2. 6.

8 Obs. *Luxury breeds oppression.* As covetousness is never satisfied, so neither is intemperance; when great men are wedded to their lusts, then to maintain them they fall to oppression, crying, *Give, give, that we may drink.* Men devoted to their lusts are insatiable, though they have enough, yet, like fat beasts they must drink more; they make their bellies their gods, and therefore it is no wonder to see them active in promoting its interest to the utmost, *Isa.* 22. 13. 1 *Cor.* 15. 32. this ruines Persons and Nations. The *Curii*, and *Fabritii*, by their contentation and temperance advanced the *Roman* Empire, when their Successors by Covetousness and Luxury destroyed it.

9 Obs. *Wicked Rulers usually are great Bribers.* They are all for gifts and rewards, crying, *Hab, Hab*, Give, give, Bring, bring, *Hos.* 4. 18. they stirre up Lawyers, Attornies, and other inferiour Officers, to bring in Grieſt to their Mills, that they may divide the spoyl, and make a prey of their poor Clients. Great men want not instruments to assist them in their wickedness be it never so vile; let *Jezebel* but contrive the Tragedy of *Naboths* death, and she will finde Elders that will act it for her. If *Amnon* be sick of Lust, there is a *Jonadab* ready to adde fuel to the flame. Did not the Lord bind Kings in chains, and great ones in fetters of iron, setting them their bounds which they cannot pass, there would be no living for good men in the world.

Against Bribery, see my Comment. on Psal. 82, 1. p. 89.

10 Obs.

10 Obs. *It is the property of wicked men to incourage one another in their wickedness.* They cry, *Come*, let us drink, and be merry with the spoyls of the poor. Thus *Persecutors* say, *Come* let us lay our heads together, and work wisely, that we may destroy Gods people, *Exod.* 1. 10. *Prov.* 1. 11. The unclean Person also hath his *Come*, let us take our fill of lust, *Prov.* 7. 18. The *Idolater* hath his, *Come*, let us joyn together to make our Idols, *Isa.* 42. 7. The *Drunkard* saith, *Come*, let us fetch Wine, and fill our selves with strong drink, to morrow shall be as to day, and much more abundant, *Isa.* 56. 12. *q. d.* though we drink till we be drunk, and stark mad, yet we fear no punishment, we shall fare no worse to morrow than we have done to day; God regards not such things as these; and if the wicked have their *Comes*, Gen. 11. 3. why should not Gods people have their *Comes*? wee should incourage each other in goodness, and call one another to the publick Assemblies, saying, *Come, let us goe to the house of the Lord*, Isa. 2. 3, 5. *Zech.* 8. 21. wee should call men to Christ as the Prophet doth, saying, *Come, come, come*, Isa. 55. 1. 3. *Philip* calls *Nathaniel* to come to Christ, and the VVoman of *Samaria* calls her Neighbours, *Joh.* 1. 46. & 4. 29. this duty of stirring one another up to the best things is oft commanded, as a special preservative against sin, 1 *Thes.* 5. 11. *Heb.* 3. 12, 13. & 10. 24. it is not sufficient that wee practise the Truth our selves, but wee must encourage those about us also so to doe, *Gen.* 18. 19. wee are dull and backward to the best things, and have need of quickning, *Prov.* 27. 17.

VERSE 2.

The Lord hath sworn by his Holiness, that loe the dayes shall come upon you, that he will take you away with hooks, and your posterity with fish-hooks.

IN the precedent Verse we had the *Sin* of the Rulers of *Samaria*, now comes their *Punishment*. The Prophet here tells them, that the time is even now at hand when the Lord will visit for all their Idolatry, Oppression, &c. and to procure the more credit and authority to what he spake, hee brings in the

Lord himself swearing their destruction; Gods bare word had been sufficient, but the better to awaken these secure Sinners, and assure them of some approaching Judgement, he tells them, that the Lord had sworn *by his Holiness*; that is, by himself, for Holiness is so essential to God, that hee may as soon cease to be God, as cease to be Holy, and Good. Man when he swears must swear by a greater than himself, but since there is none greater than God, therefore the Lord swears by himself, *Heb. 6. 13.* it is himself that is meant when he swears by *his great name*, Jer. 44. 26. *By his Soul*, Jer. 51. 14. Amos 6. 8. and *by his Holiness*, as here; for whatsoever is in God, is God himself.

Becodsho, in sanctitate sua, i. e. per sanctitatem suam, Heb. enim Beth, i. e. In, est nota jurantis.

In this Verse we have two parts.

1 *A Commination* of a dreadful Judgement.

2 A *Confirmation* of this Commination with an Oath; the Judgement threatned is in these words, *Lo, the dayes shall come upon you*, (i.e.) direful, dismal dayes, full of misery, and calamity shall certainly and suddenly surprize you, when you shall be carried away captive by the *Assyrian* (*Amos 5. 18, 19, 20.*) As men have their dayes of sinning, so God hath his appointed times when he will visit for sin, *Jerem. 46. 21.*

Obj. *We are rich and mighty, and cannot easily bee carried away?*

Facilitatem indicat qua hostes eos non aliter ac piscículos solent Piscatores capturi sint & abducturi. Mercer.

Ans. Riches avayl not in the day of Gods Wrath; the *Assyrian* shall as easily carry you away as the Fisher doth his little Fish which he catcheth with his hook or thorn, and puts into his bagge; they shall not need Carts to carry you away, *Fish-hooks shall doe it.* It is a Metaphor frequent in Scripture, as 2 *King.* 19. 28. *Job* 41. 1, 2. *Ezek.* 19. 4. & 29. 9. & 38. 4.

2 Here is the aggravation of their misery, they shall not only perish themselves: but their posterity shall suffer with them; *You shall be taken away with Hooks like* * *Thorns, and your posterity with* † *Fish-hooks*, q.d. you shall be like Fishes which are industriously caught, easily pulled up, and suddenly carried away on a Thorn, or Fish-hook, yee shall bee no more

* *Tsinnath, spinis*, i.e. *hamis. v. Leigh. Critic. S. Heb. p. 200.*

† *Besrath dugah, hamis piscatoriis, Sirath à Sir, spina, vel, hamus, significat spinas seu hamos quibus minora animalia trahi solent, & venatio propri, &c. Sanctius.*

more like fat Kine which abide in their Pasture; but I will root up you and yours, you shall be carried into Captivity. As the Fisher driveth the Fish out of his holds, and then catcheth and killeth it; so shall the *Assyrians* violently pull you out of your holds and habitations for the slaughter.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 Obs. *Swearing in it self is not unlawful.* God himself who cannot sin, yet swears by his Holinass; so *Isa.* 45. 23. & 62. 8. *Jer.* 51. 14. *Heb.* 6. 13. but of this at large elsewhere. In my Com. on 2 Tim. 4. 1.

2 Obs. *God is Holiness it self.* It is essential to him, and therefore it is here put for himself. The Lord hath sworn by his Holiness; that is, by himself. Holiness in Angels and Men is Accidental, they may lose their Holiness and yet bee Creatures still; but Holiness is so con-natural to God, that hee may as soon cease to bee God, as to be holy. But of this elsewhere. P. 305. Doct. *Gouge* on Heb. 6. 13. p. 83. to 92. Beauty of Holiness, chap. 1.

3 Obs. *It is a very hard thing to convince secure Sinners of an approaching Judgement.* God is constrained to swear here, to assure them of the certainty and infallibility of his Threatnings. As in times of Adversity and Temptation men are hardly brought to beleeve the Promises, (*Psal.* 116. 11.) so in times of Prosperity: it is hard to convince men of the truth of Gods Threatnings; *I spake to thee in thy prosperity, and thou wouldest not hear*, Jer. 22. 21. See more in *Greenhil* on Ezek. 12. 22. Obs. 1. p. 493. and Mr. *Trapp* on Jer. 22. 21.

4 Obs. *Sin and Punishment are inseparable.* In the first Verse we had their *Sin*, and in this second, their *Punishment*: as men have their daies of sinning, so God hath his dayes of punishing for sin, *Deut.* 28. 16, 17, &c. *Psal.* 37. 13. *Jer.* 46. 21. & 50. 27. 31. *Joel* 1. 15. *Luke* 19. 43. *Revel.* 18. 8.

No sooner had *Ahab* killed *Naboth*, and taken possession of his Vineyard, but presently the Lord sends *Elijah* with a whole volley of Judgements against him, 1 *King.* 21. 16. to 25.

5 *Such as oppress others, shall at last bee oppressed themselves.* Look what measure men mete to others, God will raise up some that shall mete the like to them again. These fat

fat Beasts did goar the poor, and get their estate from them; now the Lord raiseth up the *Assyrian* against them, who with their Hooks should pull them out of their estates and habitations, as Fishes out of the water. God loves to pay Sinners in their own coyn, and to retaliate the wrongs which they have done to others. Thus *Adonibezek* confesseth, that as he had done to others, so God had requited him, *Judg.* 1. 7. such as shew no mercy to others, shall have none themselves, *Jam.* 2. 13. *Babylon*, that had tortured and abused the Saints, must have double given her, *Revel.* 18. 6. the *Sodomites* that burnt with lust, were burnt with fire from heaven. *Gen.* 19. 5. 24. *Josephs* Brethren that sold him into distress, were at last distressed themselves, and acknowledge Gods Justice in it, *Gen.* 42. 21. *Davids* Sin in numbering the people, was punisht with diminishing of the people. Hereby God doth more sensibly convince men of their Sin, when they may read it in the punishment.

Thus those who are disobedient to their Parents, God raiseth up of their Children that shall rebel against them. Those that abuse their first Wives, are oft-times punisht by the second; and those Servants that were false to their Masters, shall be punisht with Servants that will be perfidious to them. Let us therefore by the punishment labour to finde out the Sin that brought it, and judge our selves for it, and we shall not be judged of the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 11. 32.

6 Obs. *When a People are ripe for ruine they shall suddenly and easily be destroyed.* God staies but till the sins of a People be full, and then he suddenly brings them down, *Gen.* 15. 16. look how easily the Fisher pulls up his little Fish with his Hook, and carries it away; so easily did the *Assyrian* carry away this Idolatrous people into Captivity, now that their day was come. There is no power or policy against God; hee can destroy the stoutest enemy with the greatest facility, *Isa.* 25. 11. if he be angry with a People, he wants not Fishers, Hooks, Hunters, to pursue them, and carry them away, *Jer.* 16. 16. *Hab.* 1. 14, 15, 16.

See more in *Greenhil* on Ezek. 29. 4. p. 553. and in my Comment. on 2 Tim. 3. 9. p. 183.

7 Obs. *Children many times fare the worse for their wicked Parents.* The Parents are taken away with hooks, and the Posterity with Fish-hooks; root and branch must be stockt up. It is just with God to cut off the wicked with their seed,

as

as we kill the Wolf with her Litter, and the Fox with her Cubs, *Deut.* 28. 41. *Hos.* 13. 16. But of this at large elsewhere.

In my Comment. on *Hos.* 13. 16. Obs. 12. p. 80, to 86. & *Attersol* on Numb. 14. 34. p. 615.

VERSE 3.

And yee shall goe out at the breaches, every Cow at that which is before her, and yee shall cast them into the Palace, saith the Lord.

THe Prophet continues his Threatning, as appears by the Copulative, *And, yee shall goe out of the Breaches.* Hee amplifies their calamity by that fear and consternation which should surprize them; the walls of *Samaria* being broken down, those Grandees which before went in great state and order, should now confusedly, like so many frighted Beasts, flee out at every breach to save themselves; so that in this Verse we have, as in the former, 1. *A Commination*, or Judgement threatned, *Yee shall goe out at the breaches.* 2. A confirmation of this Commination, *saith the Lord.* The better to awaken them he adds this again, that they had not to doe with man, but with the Almighty, who will not be mocked, nor dallied withall.

The Prophet goes on in directing his speech to the Nobles, Judges, and Counsellours of the Land, though he spare not the inferiour sort, yet because the Rulers were the ringleaders in sin; therefore he bends his speech principally against them.

1 Here is the Title which he gives them, viz. *Cowes*, a blunt term, but a fit one; this is implied in the feminine Gender, *Una quaeq; scil. vacca*, as verse the first, *q. d. you look upon your selves as great men, but in my eye yee are as so many fat Beasts, and not one of you shall escape Gods revenging hand*, 2 King. 17. 20.

2 Here is the misery that attends these wanton luxurious Beasts, they shall be so full of fear, that *they shall run out at the breaches of the walls*, leaving all their riches behind them.

The words admit of some difficulty, and therefore I shall open them distinctly.

Yee shall goe out of the breaches, viz. Which the enemy hath made

made in your walls. *Samaria* had been long besieged, and the *Assyrian* had made many breaches in the walls of the City, at which they attempted to run out and save themselves by flight, even as Beasts when they are frighted run out at a gap.

Every Cow at the breach which is before her; that is to say, any way, for they had neither Gates nor Walls whole. Valiant men keep their ranks and files in despight of all opposition, *Joel* 2. 7, 8. but faint-hearted, fearful sinners shift for themselves, and take the next gap to run out at. As beasts when chased, run on heaps disorderly, so these fly from their enemies tumultuously, and confusedly, without any respect to their companions; seeking only to save themselves, *Amos* 2. 14, 15, 16.

And yee shall cast them into the Palace; q. d. that yee may fly away the swifter, yee shall cast away your pleasant and precious things, and shall fly naked from your enemy. The Learned conceive there may bee an *Ellipsis* in the words, which may be thus supplied; yee shall cast away these things [which yee have brought] into the Palace, as Bribes, Treasures, Jewels, and precious things which you brought into the Palace, for security and safety in that strong place; yee shall now in your fear cast them all away. This is conceived to bee the most genuine sense, yet the learned are divided.

1 Some render the word thus, Yee shall bee cast as Captives into *Armenia*, or into Mount *Armon*, but these mistake the Original word, *Habarmonah*: where *Harmon* is not a proper name, but a common name, and signifieth a Palace, High-house, or Tower, from *Ram*, *altus*, *excelsus*.

In Harmon, vulg. in *Armeniam*; Chald.

2 Others thus, *You shall cast your selves into the Palace*, viz. to hide your selves there, from the fury of the *Assyrian*, but in vain, for hee shall batter those Towers, and take you there.

3 *Calvin* thus, You shall cast your selves, *e Palatio*, out of the Palace, that is, yee shall fly for your lives, and leave all your pleasant things behind you in your forsaken Palaces.

4 The *Dutch* Annotations thus, Yee shall throw away that which was brought into the Palace, (*i. e.*) that which

you

you gathered into your Palaces by violence and robbery, you shall now throw it away, alluding to that of *Amos* 3. 10. *Yee store up violence and robbery in your Palaces*; but when the Sword comes yee shall throw all away, and think it well if yee can save your lives; so that in these two Verses we have a three-fold punishment threatned against *Israel*, 1. *Banishment*, and transplantation out of their own Land, Vers. 2. 2. *Flying before their enemies*. 3. *Loss of goods*, ver. 3.

Yee shall cast away the things of the Palace, so the Margin of our Bible.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Fear and amazement is the proper portion of wicked men.* Those that fear not God, have cause to fear every thing. All are enemies when God is an enemy, *Deut.* 28. 65. *Prov.* 28. 1. *Joel* 2. 6. these men here run, some this way, and some another way; one runs out of the City, and another runs into the Palace, but all in vain, for there is no escaping when God pursues, *Amos* 9. 1, 2, 3, 4. though wicked men may seem full of courage and confidence in times of peace, yet when Judgement shall arrest them, none so amort and amazed as they, *Levit.* 26. 36. *Isa.* 33. 14. *Dan.* 5. 6. But of this at large elsewhere.

In my Com. on Psal. 73. 19. See *Atterbol* on Numb. 22. 3. p. 899, 879

2 Obs. *Wicked men are the Pests of the places where they dwell.* By their sins they bring down the walls of Cities, and make breaches in them for their enemies to enter and destroy them, the very stones and timber cry for judgement against them, *Zech.* 5. 4.

See more in my Com. on *Hos.* 13. 16. Obs. 7. p. 71

3 Observe, *Partners in sin will leave men in their sorrow.* Those that were united before, yet when judgement comes they look for the nearest Breach to run out at, not staying for others. When *Judas* was troubled in conscience for betraying his Lord and Master, his companions in sin leave him to shift for himself, with a *Look thou to that*, Mat. 27. 4.

4 Obs. *Creature-comforts cannot steed us in a day of wrath.* *Prov.* 11. 4. Silver and Gold will not then avail, *Ezek.* 7. 19. all Jewels and Treasures fail us in time of distress, only the jewel of a good Conscience, like a faithful friend, will never leave us, nor forsake us.

See my Com. on *Hos.* 13. 15. p. 58, 59, 60.

VERSE 4. 5.

Come to Bethel *and transgress, at* Gilgal *multiply transgression, and bring your Sacrifices every morning, and your Tithes after three years.*

And offer a Sacrifice of thanks-giving with leaven, and proclaim and publish the Free-offerings, for this liketh you, O yee children of Israel, *saith the Lord,*

THe Prophet goes on with his Charge against *Israel*, and that the justness of Gods Judgements, which he threatned to bring upon this people might bee made apparent to the world, he comes to set forth their gross *Idolatry*, together with their obstinacy and induration therein, insomuch as no Punishments could work upon them; this makes the Lord begin with a most biting and bitter Sarcasm, saying, *Goe to Bethel and transgress.*

The Prophet had before charged them with *cruelty*, now he upbraids them for their Idolatry, and false-worship, set up by *Jeroboam* their first King, augmented by many of the succeeding Kings, and endured so long as the Kingdom endured; till at last it brought them into Captivity, as I have shewed at large elsewhere.

In my Com. on *Hos.* 13. 16

The Prophet here by a *Prolepsis*, prevents an Objection, whereas they might think to escape Gods Judgements by their Sacrifices, and Idolatrous services; the Prophet tells them, that this is so farre from pacifying Gods wrath, that it incenseth him the more against them, and therefore to express his great indignation against them, hee sarcastically bids them, *Goe to Bethel and transgress, &c.*

In the words we have, 1. An Ironical concession, or Sarcastical exhortation, *Goe to Bethel and transgress.* This seems to be a *Precept*, but is indeed a strong *Prohibition*, as appears, *Hos.* 4. 15. *Amos* 5. 5. 21, 22. *Seek not Bethel, enter not into Gilgal*, and therefore the Chaldee Paraphrast sets it down positively by way of assertion: *Yee have come to Bethel and transgrest, yee have multiplied sins in Gilgal.* There they Worshipped the golden Calves out of a good intention, conceiting that they Worshipped God, when indeed they sacrificed

Est vox indignantis, Ironice. quidem loquitur Deus, sed intensa profert indignationem suam. Calvin.

unto

unto Devils (2 *Chron.* 11. 15.) and therefore the Lord here in an holy indignation Ironically upbraids them with their Idolatry, *q. d. Since by no means you will be reclaimed, but are desperately set on your own wayes, since there is no remedy, goe on, take your own hearts lusts, and fill up the measure of your iniquity.* Hee gives them the reins in wrath, and since they will be filthy, he bids them be filthy still. As angry Parents are wont to say to their desperate Children, I see you will have your own wayes, why since there is no remedy, goe on and perish. The like Sarcastical, taunting speeches, testifying Gods indignation against sin, we have in other places; as *Jer.* 7. 21. *Ezek.* 20. 39. *Goe and serve every one his Idols*, *q. d.* follow your Idols if you please, I had rather yee did so, than dissemble as you doe, to my dishonour.

2 What must they doe, or rather what must they not doe at *Bethel*? why, 1. They must transgress, *viz.* the Law of God concerning his Worship. 2. Multiply transgressions. 3. Bring their Sacrifices every morning. 4. Their Tithes at three years end. 5. Yet more, offer a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving; and 6. Proclaim the Free-will-offerings.

3 Here is the ground of all their Idolatry, superstition, and Will-worship, for *this pleaseth you, O yee children of Israel*; *q. d.* it is not I that command you so to doe, but it is your own rebellious wills that set you on work, you love and desire to have it so.

Come to Bethel; *Dan*, *Bethel*, *Gilgal*, were the three chief places in which the *Israelites* did worship their Idols;

1 *Dan* was defiled with the Idolatry of the golden Calves, (1 *King.* 12. 29, 30. *Amos* 8. 14.)

2 *Bethel* signifies the House of God, it was the place where God appeared to *Jacob*, and after appointed it for the place of his Worship, *Gen.* 28. 17. & 35. 1. *Hos.* 12. 4. but *Jeroboam* setting up the golden Calves here, turned *Bethel*, the House of God, into Beth-aven, the house of Vanity and iniquity, of confusion and misery, *Hos.* 4. 15. & 5. 8. & 10. 5. The people had a good conceit of the Holiness of *Bethel*, where God appeared to *Jacob*, this made *Jeroboam* to set up a Calf there. This place formerly was called *Luz*, but upon Gods extraordinary appearing to *Jacob* there, when hee fled from his brother *Esau*, he changed the name, and called it *Bethel*, the house of God,

3 *Gilgal* was the key of *Canaan*, situate between *Jordan* and *Jericho*, this place was famous for sundry services there performed to God, there was the Tabernacle, and there Sacrifices were offered unto God. But now it became degenerate and infamous, insomuch that the Lord complains, *Hos.* 9. 15. *All their wickedness is in Gilgal*, that was the common sink and sewer where all their Idolatry met, and therefore the Lord forbids his People to goe to *Gilgal*, that they might not be tainted with the Idolatry of the place: Those Idolatrous *Israelites*, thought it not sufficient to worship the Golden Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, but they would worship *Baal*, and other Idols, at *Gilgal* too; so dangerous it is to give way to superstition and false-worship, there is no end nor measure with such persons; they adde Sinne sin, and Idolatry to Idolatry, till they come to ruine.

Adde ye * *transgressions*, rebellions, prevarications, by your frequent Sacrifices, *q. d.* Goe on still and persevere in your perverse, malicious practises, adding sin to sin, and one provocation to another, that all the world may see your wildness, and the justness of Gods Judgements on you.

* *Pesharim, transgressio, prævaricatio, defectio, rebellio, non simplex & qualiscunq; sed maliciosa, Musculus. Proprie significat desistere ab ejus mandatis sub cujus imperio sit. Ming.*

Bring your Sacrifices every morning; for so the * Law enjoyned them to offer a Lambe without blemish in Sacrifice every morning, and another at evening, *Exod.* 29. 39. *Numb.* 28. 3, 4. under the Morning Sacrifice is included also the Evening Sacrifice, but the Prophet expresseth only the Morning Sacrifice to note their diligence, and great pains which they took in observing these external Rites, they were at it as duly as the morning came.

* *Magna fuit audatia in hoc Propheta, qui etiam summa & optima in speciem opera, quæ Deo verè fiebant, non veritus est damnare & rejicere. Luther.*

And your Tithes after three years; or, in the third year. In the letter of the text it is *after three dayes*; it is an usual Hebraism to put dayes for years, as *Gen.* 24. 1. *Numb.* 9. 22. *Levit.* 25. 29. 1 *Sam.* 27. 7. some understand it of their three solemn feasts appointed to be observed every year by the Law, *viz.* the Passeover, Pentecost, and feast of Tabernacles; in

Shelosheth Jamim, tribus diebus, i. e. tertio anno.

in which none might appear empty-handed, but certain kind of Tithes were then to be spent, *Exod.* 23. 14, 15, 16, 17. *Levit.* 23. *Deut.* 16. but the most genuine sense is that which alludes to the Law, *Deut.* 14. 28, 29. & 26. 12. for the right understanding of this Law, we must know that there was a threefold Tithe paid by the Jewes, the first were the yearly Tithes given to the Levites; a second Tithe was set apart by the Owners for their journies, sacrifices, and feastings at *Jerusalem* thrice in the year, and yet there was a third Tithe laid up in store, which was distributed among the Levites, the poor, the fatherless, and the widow; and this is the third years Tythe here mentioned. Now these Idolatrous *Israelites* the better to colour their Hypocrisie, like Apes did seem to imitate this Law, that so they might not be wanting in any external duty of piety or charity.

See more fully Mr. *Art. Jackson*'s Annot. on Deut. 14. 28, 29

Q. *But since these* Israelites *did what God commanded in the Law, wherein did they fayl?*

Ans. 1. They fayled in sacrifizing to Idols, and not to God. 2. In bestowing those Tithes on false Prophets, which were ordained for the maintenance of the true. 3. Though some of them did offer such Sacrifices as were commanded, and that to the true God, yet they fayled in the *place*, for they should have offered their Sacrifices at *Jerusalem*, where God had set his Temple (*Deut.* 12. 5, 6.) and they goe to *Bethel* and *Gilgal*, where Idols were set up.

The sum of all is this, *Thus saith the Lord in great indignation against you, O house of Israel, for your provocations, since yee obstinately refuse to hearken to me, and my Prophets, Goe too, proceed in your Idolatry, and since you are so besotted by Satan, and his Agents, as to worship Calves instead of mee, goe on, and take your fill, glut your selves with sin, and fil up the measure of your iniquity, that wrath may come upon you to the uttermost, and since you refuse to goe to Jerusalem and Worship mee, goe to Bethaven and worship Devils. Goe on also in your Hipocrisie; and the Worship which I have appointed to my People, that doe yee imitate, bring your Morning Sacrifices which are due to me, and offer them to your Idols; and that which the Law required of you, for the maintenance of my Levites and the Poor, viz. to lay aside the Tithes of every third year for pious and charitable uses;*

doe

doe yee give that also to your Idols. Coe on also and Hypocritically imitate my people in Sacrifices of Thanksgiving, and Free-offerings, for in these external Ceremonies, yee delight, more than in internal obedience.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Ironical and Sarcastical, taunting* biting *speeches may lawfully be used as occasion requires against wicked men.* Those Stoical stocks the *Quakers* are against all laughter, and against all ingenious Ironies and Sarcastical speeches, as if they savoured of the flesh, when it is clear from many places of Scripture that they may lawfully be used; for, 1. We finde that God himself used them, *Gen.* 3. 22. *The man is become like one of us*; i. e. see how unlike to us he is become. So *Judg.* 10. 14. *Goe cry to the gods which yee have chosen*; i. e. let your Idols help you if they can in your distress. So *Isa.* 8. 9, 10. & 47. 12. *Ezek.* 28. 3, 4, 5. 2. Christ used them, *Matth.* 23. 32. & 26. 45. 3. The Prophets used them. Thus *Elijah* derided the worshippers of *Baal*, 1 *King.* 18. 27. and *Micajah* to *Ahab*, 1 King. 22. 15. and *Job* 12. 2. & 26. 2, 3. and *Solomon* to the young man, *Eccles.* 11. 9. and the Church to her enemies, *Lam.* 4. 21. *Rejoyce O Edom and be merry*; but know that thy feasting shall be turned into fasting, and thy mirth into mourning. So *Jer.* 22. 20. & 46 9, 11. & 51. 8, 11. *Zech.* 11. 13. *Paul* used them, 1 *Cor.* 4. 8. 10. & 2 *Cor.* 11. 19. & 2. 12, 13. yea the Scripture affords many *Sarcasms*, which are biting taunts, they are somewhat like an Irony, but that they are somewhat more bitter; as *Gen.* 37. 19. *Exod.* 14. 11. *Nahum.* 3. 14.

Ironia species, est Sarcasmus, sed Ironia est acerbior. Glassius.

2 Obs. *Wee must shun those places where Idolatry is set up. Israel* must not once goe to *Bethel*, and *Gilgal*, where Idols are, *Hos.* 4. 15. *Amos* 5. 5. what *Solomon* sayes of the Corporal Harlot, may fitly be applied to the Spiritual one, *Prov.* 5. 8. *Remove thy way farre from her, come not nigh the door of her house.* As we shun Pest-houses, so should we shun those infectious places. Such as partake with the wicked in their sins, shall share with them in their plagues, *Revel.* 18. 4. not only *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, but their followers also perisht with them, *Numb.* 16. It is dangerous for men to hear *Quakers* and Seducers, for by your example you doe not only incourage

courage others so to do, but you make your selves accessary to their sin and punishment; what *Solomon* saies of all the wicked in general, holds true in this particular (*Prov.* 4. 14, 15.) we should *take heed of going in the way of evil men, avoyd it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away*. See how the Holy Ghost useth variety of expressions to the same purpose and all to make the matter sink deeper into our hearts.

See more in my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 5. p. 138, &c.

3 Obs. *Idolatry and Sin debase places. Bethel* and *Gilgal* formerly famous for the Worship of God, yet now become infamous for Idolatry, Gods people must not once come there. As sin debaseth persons, and makes them that they can never excel (*Gen.* 49. 4.) so it debaseth places too, and turns *Bethel*, the House of God, into *Beth-aven*, the house of vanity and iniquity, *Hos.* 4. 15. what *Michal* said of *David* falsly, *Thou hast made thy self vile*, (2 *Sam.* 6. 20.) that is most true of all Sinners, they make themselves, and the places where they live, vile and contemptible.

4 Obs. *There is no inherent holiness in places*; if there had, *Bethel* had not been *Beth-aven*, nor *Rome* become an Harlot. Places are not holy *per se & simpliciter*, but only *propter usum*, by reason of the praying, preaching, and dispensing of the holy Sacraments there. The place doth not commend the Prayers, but the sincere affection of him that prayeth; neither doth the place sanctifie the Prayers, but the Prayers the place; Churches are made of Wood and Stone, and so are uncapable of Holiness; Christ came to redeem and sanctifie Souls, not seats. The Legal, Ceremonial, Typical Holiness of places is by the coming of Christ abolished, now, the substance is come, and the shadows are gone; in Gospel times there is no difference of places in respect of Holiness. God will now be Worshipped in every place, *Mal.* 1. 11. *Joh.* 4. 23. 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. the Field and the House are now as holy as the Church, yea *Paul* and *Silas* pray in Prison and are heard, *Acts* 16. 25. so that Churches in themselves are no more holy than other places; but it is the Ordinances of God, and the Assembly of Gods People met there, to celebrate those Ordinances, which for that present make it more holy, and more to be esteemed by us than all other places, or peeces of ground whatsoever, *Psal.* 84. 10. and therefore they should be kept sweet and decent, though not pompous and gaudy.

See this Point largely discust by D. *Willet*, *Synop.* Papismi. controvers 9th Q. 6. Art. 2. p. 480. edit. ult. & *Hildersham* on *John* 4. 23. Lect. 33. p. 139 *Atterfol* on Numb. 7. 8, 9. p. 456. & p. 494.

icite Pontifices, in sacro quid facit aurum? Persius.

The Heathen Poet could say, It is vanity to have gold in Temples. Here then is the difference between us and the Papists, they make Churches to be holy *per se*, in respect of the ground and building, but we in respect of the end and holy use for which they serve, *viz.* for the Service of God, and the Assemblies of his People; but the exercises of Religion being ended, and the Congregation dissolved, there is no more inherent Holiness remaining in it, more than in another place.

5 Obs. *It is a great provocation to set up Idols there, where wee have received signal mercies.* God had done great things for his people at *Bethel*, it was the place where hee appeared to his people; and *Gilgal* was very * famous for many Mercies, at *Gilgal* they were *Circumcised*, there God rolled away the reproach of *Ægypt* from them, there they had the *Passeover*, and there was Sacrificing, &c. now to multiply transgressions at *Gilgal*, and to have all their villany acted there (*Hos.* 9. 15.) must needs be a great aggravation of their sin, and hasten wrath. To sin against signal Mercies doth double the sin. It is said of the *Israelites*, that *they provoked him at the Sea, even at the red Sea* (Psal. 106. 7.) where God shewed them a remarkable Mercy, in leading them safely thorow the Sea, and drowning their cruel enemies, yet there they provoked him, at the Sea, even at the red Sea; it is spoken Emphatically, even at that Sea which God had carried them safely thorow. Thus *they made a Calfe in Horeb* (Psal. 106. 19.) where the Lord appeared unto them, gave them his Law, and Made a Covenant with them, yet here they provoked him to wrath to their own destruction, *Deut.* 9. 8. it greatly aggravates sin when it is committed in a *Canaan*, and in a Land of Righteousness to deal unjustly, *Isa.* 26. 10. Wee of this Land have received many signal Mercies, if wee goe on to abuse them, as wee have done of late years, what can we expect but signal judgements.

* See 9. things which made *Gilgal* famous, in *Burroughs* on *Hos.* 4. 15. p. 181, 182.

Minus fuit peccatum Deum verum in imagine adorare, quam planè à Deo vero apostatare, & servire Diis alienis, Rivet.

6 Obs. *Wicked men grow worse and worse*; They fall away more and more, they doe not only sin, but they multiply sin; they think it not sufficient to worship the golden Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, but they must to *Gilgal* also, and there Worship *Baal*, which was the vilest and highest Idolatry, for those that worshiped the Calves, worshiped God, but in a false way,

way, but those utterly forsook the true God to worship *Baal*, whom they made their God, as appears by that of *Elijah*, *If Baal be a god*, implying that they esteemed him so. When wicked men begin to fall they know not where they shall rest, they have no foundation, but run from error to error, till at last they end in Atheism. (But of this at large elsewhere.) Evil men and deceivers grow worse and worse, though they be wearied in their wicked wayes yet they will goe on, *Jerem.* 9. 3. 5. they are in this like the lewd VVoman, *Lassata, non satiata*; they never come to their *Maximum quod sic*, in sinful wayes, *Prov.* 23. *ult.* Sin and Error is endless, it knowes not when, nor where to stop, *Hos.* 10 1. & 13. 2. *Ahaz* that at first burnt Incense to Idols, at last burnt his Children to them, 2 *Chron.* 28. 3. *Error minimus in principio, fit maximus in fine*, The cloud that at first shewes but like a mans hand, may suddenly over-spread the whole Heavens.

In my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 13. p. 229. *Attersol* on Numb. 14. p. 592.

7 Obs. *Good intentions are no warrant for evil actions*; *Jeroboam* pretended well when hee set up the golden Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, saying, *Behold thy Gods, O Israel, which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt* (1 King. 12. 28.) his meaning was not to cast off the true God, but to set him forth by some visible resemblance, thinking that this might bee as good a way of Religion, as the Ark and Cherubims at *Jerusalem*; but the Lord tells them, that since they had set up a worship of their own inventing, hee abhorred both them and their services, (*Amos* 5. 21, 22.) and calls it a worshipping of Devils, 2 *Chron.* 11. 15. Thus *Aaron* and the *Israelites* pretended well when they set up the golden Calf, *Exod.* 32. 4, 5. *Micah* and his Mother had a good meaning when they erected the Ephod, and Teraphim for the service of the true God, *Judg.* 17. 3. 13. *Paul* had a good meaning when hee persecuted the Saints, *Acts* 26. 9. yea and many that kill them think they doe God good service, *Joh.* 16. 2, 3. *Uzzah* it is conceived was a good man, and out of a good intent would have kept the Ark from falling, yet for medling with that which belonged to the Priests, God smote him dead, 2 *Sam.* 6. 6, 7.

Those gifted men amongst us that presume to Preach without a Call, no doubt but many of them have good intentions, and think they doe God good service, but because they have

no command nor commission from God so to doe, it is an abomination to him, and he will one day ask them, *Who required this at your hands?* *Saul* out of a good intent, *viz.* that hee might sacrifice, spared the fat Cattel; and *Gideon* made an Ephod for Gods Worship, which God had not commanded, but this ruined both them and their Families, *Judg.* 8. 27. 1 *Sam.* 15. 21. *Nadab* and *Abihu* had no evil intent in offering strange Fire, yet were smitten dead for their pains, *Levit.* 10. 2, 3. So the *Papists*, and the worst of men have their good meanings, which at last brings them to evil ends. It cannot excuse their evil dealing with God and his people. What Sin so vile that is not covered with the vayl of a good meaning? How many wayes are there which seeme good in mens owne eyes, yet the issues thereof are the wayes of death, *Prov.* 14. 12. we may not therefore doe every man what seemeth good in his own eyes, but what is good in Gods eye, *Deut.* 12. 8.

Nulla necessitas incidere potest, qua legem in Christo latam evertere nos cogat; nam huic parere summa est necessitas, Tilenus

Those things which in themselves are evil, may not for any good ends, or plausible intentions be practised. None may doe evil that good may come thereof, *Rom.* 3. 8. wee must have a command from God for what we doe, else our owne good minds and meanings will doe us no good; yea this would open a gap to all manner of villanies; the Murderer, the Drunkard, the Traytor, &c. * they all pretend they have good meanings in what they doe; but such vain conceits and crooked Rules of multitudes, custom, good meaning, &c. hath brought thousands to destruction; we must to the Law, and to the Testimony, and walk according to that rule if ever wee expect peace, *Gal.* 6. 16.

* See more in Mr. *Youngs* Drunkards Character, Sect. 53. p. 206

8 Obs. *In the Worship of God we must keep close to the Rule, for matter, manner, time, and place*; *Israel* failed here in these particulars, and therefore God rooted them up. 1 They changed the place of Gods Worship, 1 *King*, 12. 29. 2. The time, *vers.* 32. 3. The manner, *vers.* 28. 4. The Priests, *vers.* 31, 33. and this ruined them, 1 *King.* 13. 33, 34. it is not the Traditions of men, or Customes of Forefathers, Antiquity, or Succession that is our rule; the *Israelites* here might have pleaded Prescription for their Idolatry for above two hundred years, all their twenty Kings successively were Idolatrous from first to last, and the people generally followed them, yet this did not make their practice good;

good; all *will-worship is vain worship*, Mat. 15. 9. it is a Sin equalized to Murder, *Levit.* 17. 3, 4. it is called here *transgressing*, and *multiplying transgressions in Gilgal.* In Gods Worship we must doe nothing without the warrant of his VVord, *Numb.* 15. 39. *Deut.* 12. 8. 11. 13, 14. *ult. Ezek.* 20. 19. *Mat.* 28. 20. *Col.* 2. *ult.* his VVorship must bee simple and pure, agreeable to his own will, not ours. The Head of the Sacrifice was to be cast away, implying, that in matters Divine and heavenly, we must cast away our own fancies and devices, keeping close to Gods VVord, as *Moses* and Gods people did, *Exod.* 39. 2. 5. 7. 21. 26. 29. 32. 42, 43.

See more in Mr. *Strong* his thirty one select Ser. on *Zech.* 14. 9. p. 465. Mr. *Burgess* on *Orig. Sin.* p. 281. Mr. *Vines* Serm. on 2 *Cor.* 11. 3. Drunkards Character, Sect. 54. p. 2. 11. &c. Mr. *Cawdry* against Doct. *Hammond*, in a Treatise of his against Superstition and Will-worship, Mr. *Crofton* against Altars.

9 Obs. *Religious duties must be our daily task.* VVe must not bring our Sacrifices once a month, or once a year, but as the Lord renewes his Mercies every morning, so must we renew our sacrifices of Prayer and Praises (*Exod.* 29. 38, 39. *Numb.* 28. 3, 4) our daily wants, our daily dangers, our daily temptations, call upon us for daily Prayer; such constant Customers shall be sooner and better served, than such as are strangers to those duties. *David* was a constant Trader in Prayer Morning and Evening, and see what follows? *Thou shalt hear me*, Psalm 55. 17. As the Priest was every morning to renew the Fire on the Altar, and to lay thereon the Morning Sacrifice, so should we *when we awake bee still with God*, Psal. 139. 18. all things are blest unto us by Prayer; As the Ark when it came to the house of *Obed-Edom* it brought a blessing with it; so when duties are set up in their power, there God comes and blesseth his people, we should therefore dedicate our houses to God by Prayer as *David* did, *Psal.* 30. title, and 2 *Sam.* 6. 20. It was an high commendation of *Aurelian* the Emperours Family, that it was *refertahonis, & Ecclesia Dei*, it was full of good people, and was a little Church. So were the houses of the faithful in the Primitive times, hence we read so oft, *To the Church in thy house*, Rom. 16. 5. 1 Cor. 16. 19. Col. 4. 15. Philemon 2. the words will bear a double construction. 1. It implies, that the people

See at large *Attersol* on *Philemon* 2. *Reyners* Precepts for practise, p. 87. Edit. 11.

ple of God met in those houses to hear his VVord preached, to celebrate the Sacraments, and Pray; for publick places were not then allowed them. 2. Or else it notes unto us that their private Families were now so piously ordered, and religiously instructed, that they seemed to be little Churches rather than ordinary houses, because of the Praying, Reading of Gods Word, singing of Psalmes, and other religious Exercises that were practised there. So *Joshua* resolved, that hee and his house would serve the Lord, *Josh.* 24. 15. Religion makes the best Families, it breeds the best Children, and makes the most obedient Subjects, and Servants, as wee see in *Abrahams* Family. Sad is the condition then of those Christians that take no care of their Families, but let Luxury, Riot, and disorder debase them; such houses may better bee called Taverns, or Tap-houses, rather than Churches of God.

That daily duties ought to be performed in Families, see Mr. *Rob. Boulsons* Direct. for Walking, *p.* 244. 249. *Fenners* Catechism, *p.* 76. *Cobbet* on Prayer, *p.* 88. Mr. *Jer. Dyke* his Epistle Dedicatory to *Philemon*. *Ambrose* his Medita. *p.* 199, &c. Mr. *Philip Goodwin* his Family Duties.

10 Obs. *It is not sufficient that we be religious towards God, but we must also be righteous and merciful towards men.* It is not enough that we bring our Sacrifices to him every morning, but we must also bring our Tithes to maintain his Messengers, and to succour the poor, the fatherless, and the widow. Many will seeme religious towards God, yet are unrighteous towards men; and others there are that wil seem righteous towards men, and yet are irreligious towards God; both these miscarry and come short of Heaven, the one for his religious unrighteousness, and the other for his righteous-irreligiousness; the one for his Hipocrisie, the other for his meer Morality and civility. God hates Holiness when it is not joyned with righteousness. He hath redeemed us, that we might serve him *in holiness and righteousness*; not in holiness or righteousness, the Holy Ghost hath joyned them, and we may not separate them, *Luk.* 1. 75. 2 *Pet.* 1. 6, 7. *Psa.* 19. 2. *Tit.* 2. 12. we must practise *equity* as well as *piety*, remembring that * *unrighteousness* is an abomination as well as *ungodliness*. Ministers have a right to their maintenance both *in foro poli*, & *in foro soli*, both by Gods Law, and mans Law (as I have elsewhere proved at large) and he that robs them, robs not men, but God.

* See more in my Com. on 2 Tim 3. 3. p. 81, 82. *Sal Terra. cap.* 8

2 For

2 For Mercy to the *Poor*, there is scarce any Duty more pressed upon us in the Scripture, with precepts and presidents, (*Dan.* 15. 7. 10. *Luke* 6. 36.) What promises and rewards are made to the merciful? and what heavie curses are denounced against the unmerciful and cruel man? Hee shall have judgement without mercy that shewes no mercy, *Jam.* 2. 13. as he stops his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry, and shall not be heard, *Prov.* 21. 13. *Dives* that shewed no mercy to *Lazarus*, at last had none himself; and if they be accounted Murderers who doe not releeve the poor, what are those that oppress them, and grind their faces? the Lord hath a quarrel and controversie with such as shew *no mercy*, Hos. 4. 1. Amos 2. 6, 7. such penuriousness is the way to Poverty, *Prov.* 11. 24. *There is that spares more than is meet, and it tends to poverty.* The way to increase Corn is not to keep it in the Bag, but to sow it. The curse of the Poor lights upon the cruel, (*Prov.* 28. 27.) and brings a curse upon their Children, (*Psal.* 109. 12. 16.) *Let none pity his fatherless Children*, why so? *because he remembred not to shew mercy to the poor.*

He that wants mercy of mercy shall miss,
But he shall have mercy that merciful is.
Aspiciunt oculis superi mortalia justis,
En eget auxilio qui non tulit.
Ovid. Meta. Lib. 13.

Occidisti si non pavisti. Ambro.

Let *Sodomites* be cruel and merciless (*Ezek.* 16. 49.) and Heathens that know not God (*Romans* 1. 30.) but let us that are Christians resemble Christ our Head, and be merciful as he is merciful, who went up and down doing good, to the souls and bodies of men, and whose usual saying was, *It is a more blessed thing to give than to receive*, Acts 20. 35. Hee was even compounded of love and compassion, and became poor, that wee thorow his poverty might bee made rich, 2 *Cor.* 8. 9.

See ten dissuasives from unmercifulness in Mr. *Greenhil* on Ezek. 16. 49. p. 297, 298 &c.

To incourage you to a merciful frame of spirit, in a time when mercy is almost fled out of the world, take these following Considerations.

1 By this we shall evidence our *Election and Sanctification*, Col. 3. 12. *Put on as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies*; Doe not only give an Almes, but give it with a compassionate heart, and tender affection; this will make us like the elect children of God, who are all in their generation liberal, bountiful men, according to their several abili-

abilities, they are such as *devise liberal things*, Isay. 32. 8. Job *was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame*, Job 29. he never did eare his morsel alone, *Job* 31. 20. *David* describing the godly man, makes this one Character of him: that he is gracious, full of compassion, dispenseth to the poor, shewes favour, and lends, *Psal.* 112. 4. 5. 9. *Paul* how oft doth he command, and commend such as did administer to the necessities of the poor Saints? *Dorcas* cloathed the poor with those garments which she made of her own cost in her life time; *Zacheus* when he was converted, gave the one half of his goods to the poor, *Luke* 19. 8. it is not *I will* give at my decease, when I can keep them no longer, but it is in *presenti*, *I doe give*. 2. Not of another mans goods, but of *mine own*. 3. Not to the rich, but to *the poor*. 4. Not a penny, but *the one half of my goods*, do I give to the poor. See how grace enlargeth the heart, and loosenetb it from earthly things; yea I have read of the *Turks*, that once a year the *Bashaws* and great men have their whole estates cast up by their Stewards, and they give the tenth part yearly to charitable uses; if this be true, how will these Infidels rise in Judgement against most Christians.

2 Consider that it is *a service and sacrifice* well pleasing unto God, *Phil.* 4. 18. *Heb.* 13. 16. Hence it is that the Lord so oft calls for it, and in some cases, prefers *Mercy* before Sacrifice, *Hos.* 6. 6. Learning and Valour may make a man admired, but it is humility and bounty that makes us best beloved.

Homines nullâ repropius ad Deos ascedunt quàm dando. Cicero. Regia, crede mihi, res est succurrere lapsis, imò divina res est Tanto, aliqua virtus est melior, quanto facit hominem Deo similiorem. Aquinas secunda secundæ, q. 30. Art. 4.

3 This will make us like unto God, then are we men after his own heart, when we are merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful, and good as he is good; not by way of *Equality*, but by way of *Analogy* and similitude, according to our degree and measure, *Mat.* 5. 45. now the more like unto God we are, the more he loves us, for similitude is the ground of love.

4 Hereby wee bring must glory to God, *Job.* 25. 8. As hee that oppresseth the poor, despiseth him that made him; so hee that pittieth the poor, honours him that made him, for

for God takes the kindness done to them as done to himself, *He that gives to the poor lends to the Lord.*

5. It is one chief end why the Lord gives us riches, *viz.* that wee might be his Almoners to succour the poor; he could feed them and cloath them without our help, but he hath ordained that there shall be Poor always with us, to try our bounty, love, and pitty, and to manifest it unto the world, *Joh.* 12. 8. it is Gods Corn and Wine that we enjoy, it is his blessing and free bounty that hath made us rich, when others are poor; all that we have comes from him: and it is of his own that we give unto him, 1 *Chron.* 29. 14, 16. if hee have given us *pounds*, we may well give *pence* by way of thankfulness to his poor afflicted ones; else, he that hath raised us can as easily ruine us, and strip us naked as in the day that wee were born. Let us put our selves in the poor mans case, if we our selves were poor and in distress, wee would think it the rich mans duty to succour us. As yee would have others should doe to you, so doe you to them; for with what measure you mete to others, it shall be meted to you again.

6. *All Profession, Duties, Gifts, and Graces, without this are but counterfeit.* Hence St. *James* placeth all religion as in were in this duty of Mercy, *Jam.* 1, *ult.* not that this is the life or form of other Graces (as Papists vainly) but it is a sign and evidence of the truth of other graces, even as breathing and acting is a sign of living. He that saith he hath all Gifts, and yet hath not Love, is but as sounding Brass, or a rinckling Cymbal, a meer noyse and nothing else, 1 *Cor.* 13. 1. hence Christ commands us rather to sell what we have and give to the poor, than be wanting to our selves or others in this duty, *Luk.* 12. 33. so did *Barnabas*, that Son of consolation, when the Church wanted, he sold his Land to succour it (*Acts* 4. 36, 37.) not that we are bound alwayes to sell our Land for pious uses, but if the Church of God should come to that distress, that either we must succour it, or else it will sink, then is a time to part with all. As *Lot* would have parted with his Daughters to save his Guests; so should wee part with our estate to save Gods people from perishing; and if Drunkards to satisfie their lust, will sell their Lands in the Devils service, much more should we to glorifie God, part with our Land and estate to glorifie God the giver of them.

See Mr. *Jacomb's* Ser. on Mat. 5. 7. p. 9, 10, 11, &c. p. 19. 20.

7 It shall be fully *rewarded.* God hath a Book of remembrance, wherein he registers all we doe for him and his, *Acts* 10. 5. *Heb.* 6. 10. even to a cup of cold water, all shall bee rewarded, *Matth.* 10. *ult.* Hee cannot bee a loser who hath made God his Debtor, *Hee that giveth to the poor lends to the Lord, and that which he hath given he will pay him again,* Prov. 19. 17. Hee is the best Pay-master, none more able, none more willing to recompence any service that is done for him, or his.

1 He shall have *Temporal rewards,* Prov. 11. 24. *There is that scattereth and is more increased, and he that waterth others, shall be watered himself.* This is the best means to preserve our estate, *Isa.* 32. 8. *The liberal man deviseth liberal things, and by it he is establisht.* He that honours the Lord with his riches, shall have his Barns filled with plenty, *Prov.* 3. 9, 10. Mercy and Truth shall be to them, *Prov.* 14. 22. God will bless his Trade and Calling, *Deut.* 15. 10. and make his little, increase unto a thousand. *Charity is the best Policy,* for by helping others we benefit our selves, *Job* 29. 13. As the Poor had *Job's* Alms, so he had the benefit of their Prayers, and fared the better for them. That which is well laid out, is best laid up; a diligent hand, and a distributive heart make a man truly rich, such giving is getting, such bounty is the way to plenty, and a godly liberality is a prevention of poverty; he that gives to the Poor hath Gods promise (which is sure pay) that he shall not want, *Prov.* 28. 27. *Give and it shall be given to you again, good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over* (Luke 6. 38.) see what a heap of expressions the Holy Ghost here useth, to assure us of a full reward of all our labour of love. He saith not barely, * *Give, and it shall be given you*; but 1. You shall have *good measure,* i. e. just measure according to your gift, given to you again. 2. You shall have it *pressed down*; light things wee use to press down to make good measure. 3. Yet more, *shaken together*; as Corn that goes closer together by shaking. 4. This is not all, for as if all that he had spoken had not been sufficient, he adds, you shall have it *running over.* Now, a measure

Vis ditari? amicum habeas Deum, & omnium ditissimus eris.

* *Quadruplex bonum datur à Deo.* 1. *Bona fortunæ, in divitiis, hæc dicuntur bona mensura.* 2. *Bona naturæ, ad quæ refertur gratia, quò spectat mensura conferta.* 3. *Bona gratiæ, quò spectat mensura coagitata.* 4. *Bona gloriæ, quo spectat mensura superfluens.* Stella in locum.

sure will run over as long as you pour; there is no stint, no bounds to that gift, which shall be given running over. A Vessel will run over continually, pour as long as you will.

5. Yet more, all this shall be given you *into your bosome*; that is, you shall be made sensible of the sweetness, and experimentally find the goodness and greatness of your reward. This work is wages, and like *Sampsons* Lion, it carries Hony in the belly of it; it is no spending, but lending; no laying out, but a * laying up of treasure in Heaven, above the reach of Theeves and Pyrats, *Matth.* 6. 19. Men are all for gain, why this is the best gain: by parting with *Temporals* to get *Eternals*, *Luke* 16. 9. Hence the Apostle calls the *Macedonians* Almes by the name of *Fruit*, Rom. 15. 28. Phil. 4. 17. I desire not a gift, but I desire *fruit* that may further your account. Wee pleasure not the poor so much by our *giving*, as we profit our selves by their *receiving*. Hence in *Italy* their ordinary form of Begging is, *Fate ben pro voi*, *Doe good for your own sakes*. Christ that fed five thousand, could also have fed himself and his followers without any help; but hee would be relieved by others, that so their faith and love might be made more apparent and resplendent to the world, *Luke* 8. 2, 3. *Joh.* 4. 7.

* *Præmittamus in alterum orbum, quicquid volumus non amissum. Drexelius. Nunquam hoc tollet fiscus, quod semel habueris Christum. Chrysostom. Ejusmodi ejus corruptio, est alterius generatio; ut sic cissimum lucre genus est, perdere ut acquirat. Chrysostom.*

Such doe good to their own soul. *Prov.* 11. 17.

2 Thou shalt be blest in thy *Body* with health, or if sickness doe surprize thee (as all things come alike to all) yet God will make thy bed in thy sickness, and comfort thee upon thy bed of languishing, *Psal.* 41. 2, 3.

Non memini me legisse malâ morte mortuum, qui libenter opera charitatis exercuit; habet enim multos intercessores. Hieron. ad Nepotian.

3 In thy *Name*, *Hezekiah* and his kindnesses are commended to posterity, 2 *Chron.* 32. 32. *Phebe* and *Onesiphorus* are commended on this account: such are an ornament to their Profession, and amiable in the eyes of all, *Rom.* 5. 7. for *a righteous man one would scarcely dye, but for a good man one would even dare to dye*. A Man of a severe innocency is hated, rather than loved, but a good and bounriful man wins so upon the hearts of men, that they would even dye for him; scarcely will a man dye for *a righteous man*, who is only fair and just in his dealings, but *for a good man*, that hath been mercifull and pittiful to others, and hath done much

good in his life, some may venture their lives for him.

4 In thy *Posterity*, such as have shewed mercy to others, God will raise up some that shall be merciful to theirs. Hence *Cyprian* was wont to say, *The more children the more charity should be used*; for as Wells by drawing, spring more freely, so our substance increaseth by bounty, and is blest to our posterity.

5 Blest in *Soul*, we shall have light in darkness, peace in trouble, audience in Prayer, &c. *Isa.* 58. 7, 8. 10, 11. if thou deal thy bread to the hungry, &c. *then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer thee*; and though we be sick and silent, yet works of mercy cry aloud in Gods eares for us, they have a vertual and vital; though not a vocal call, *Job* 31. 20. *The very loyns of the poor shall bless us*, even when we are sleeping in our beds, yet then are they pleading for us. Hereby wee evidence our election, and lay up a good foundation for the time to come; though Christ alone be the *foundation fundamental*, yet good works may be a *foundation evidential*, 1 Tim. 6. 19. 1 *Joh.* 3. 14. *Obadiah* proved that hee truly feared God, because he hid the persecuted Prophets of God, and fed them in a time of danger.

See Mr. *Jacombs* Ser. on Mat. 5. 7.

6 Thou shalt be *eternally blessed*, Psal. 41. 1. Prov. 14. 21. Mat. 5. 7. & 25. 34, 35. it is the way to the Kingdom, though not the meritorious cause of reigning there. This will help to loosen our affections from the earth, wee must shortly part with all these things below, now our parting with them before hand to pious uses, will make our last parting with them more easie to us, as the Apostle said, *I dye daily*; his daily trials were as so many petty deaths unto him so our daily giving will make us daily see the vanity of these things, and make our affections dye to them. The way to Heaven, it is an high, hard, long way, it is up-hill, and wee had need to unburden our selves of this thick clay. When one asked a good man why he gave away his money so freely, his answer was, *Ut levius ascenderem scalam Jacobi.*

Thus we see there is no loss in Works of Mercy, as the unmerciful, unbeleeving world imagineth, for one penny we give we shall have that as will be equivalent to many. Hence bounty to the Poor is called *sowing of seed*, 2 Cor. 9. 10. the Husband-man for one Seed that he sowes hath twenty, thirty, forty, &c. or more, again

2 Though

2. Though the Seed be hidden with Clods for the present, and seeme to dye, yet at * last it ariseth again with great increase to the Sower, (*Eccles.* 11. 1, 2.)

3 As men sow so shall they reap, if they sow sparingly they shall reap sparingly, if liberally they shall reap liberally.

4. The Husband-man doth not sow all his Seed in one place, but some here, some there; so wee must disperse our charity, and give a portion to seven, and also unto eight.

5. The only way to preserve our Corn is to sow it, for if it be kept in our Barns, and Garners, it rots and perisheth; but if it be cast into a fit ground it multiplies. Riches are lost by keeping, and kept by spending on the poor; and if Idolaters will lavish gold out of the Bagge, and spend their choyest treasures on Idols and Images, and if the *Israelites* could part with their Gold and Ear-rings, to an Idol that could not help them, nor thank them (*Exod.* 32. 3.) then surely we should spend freely on the living Images of Christ, especially since they can help us by their Prayers, and glorifie God in the use of that we give them; Let us therefore abound in this work of the Lord, for as much as wee know our labour is not in vain in the Lord. How abundantly was the *Shunamites* kindness to the Prophet *Elisha* recompensed? 1. By the gift of a Son after long barrenness. 2. By restoring her Son to life again (2 *King.* 4. 16.) 3. By fore-warning her of a famine approaching (2 *King.* 8. 1. 4.) 4. By directing her to the King, in such a season that she recovered her Land; so good it is to have an interest in the Prayers, and affections of Gods Messengers.

Misericordia comes defunctorum, Thy good works will follow thee to heaven, Rev. 14. 13.

Habeo quod dedi, perdidi quod servavi. Epitaph.

This Duty though excellent, yet meets with much opposition; though it be well-pleasing to God, yet it is unpleasant to most men; which hath made them invent so many shifts and excuses to save their purses. As,

1 Obj. *I have a Family, a Wife, Children, Servants, and Kindred to provide for, &c.*

Answ. 1. Wicked men are called absurd, unreasonable men (2 *Thes.* 3. 2.) and not without reason, for see what illogical Logick they here produce; because men have Families to provide for, therefore they cannot, or rather, they will not do good to any other. We read of many that had great Families, and yet were very merciful men, as *Abraham*, *Job*, *David*.

The *Macedonians* had Families to provide for, yet they releeved others beyond their ability (2 *Cor.* 8. 3.) though they had but little themselves, yet out of that little they were willing to give somewhat.

I have read of one Mistris *Owen* of *Islington* that had two and twenty Children, yet in her life-time shee built an Hospital, and gave fifty pound *per annum* to it; she built a Free-School, and gave a good stipend to it, and gave two thousand and five hundred pounds to other pious uses. The Lord *Harrington* had but one thousand pound *per annum* (which was but a mean estate to maintain a Lord and his followers) yet out of that hee spared one hundred pound *per annum* for pious uses.

2 By discreet giving, you provide Gods blessing for your Children, which is the best portion, *Psal.* 112. 2, 3, 5. 6. as you have succoured others, so God will raise up some to succour yours; *David* speaking of his own experience, tells us, that he *never saw the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread*, Psal. 37. 25. such giving is no hindrance to us or ours, but brings a blessing on what we have. Hence the Lord commands his people, to *leave some gleanings for the fatherless and the widow*; Why so? *That God may bless thee in the work of thy hands*, Deut. 24. 19, 20. all thy carking and caring is but lost, if God give not his blessing; many have scraped abundance of pelf together for a prodigal Heir, that hath in a trice consumed all. Men know not who shall bee their Heirs, *the riches of the wicked are laid up for the just*, yea many times a mans enemies have been his heirs.

3 Many are single, and have no Families to provide for, and yet are as hide-bound to any pious uses as any others; and therefore this is but a meer pretence and fig-leaf to hide their miserable mindes withall.

2 Obj. *I have nothing to give but what I get by my labour?*

Ans. The Apostle expresly commands such to give, *Ephes.* 4. 28. Hast but a farthing? give that; the poor Widow that had but two mites, which make a farthing, is commended by him, who looks not so much at the gift, as at the good will of the giver, *Mark* 12. 41, 42, 43. if we have but an handful of Meal, and a little Oyl, yet Gods *Elijahs* must be releeved

See Master *Jacobs* Serm. on Mat. 5. 7. p. 25. &c.

ved with it, 1 *King.* 17. 12. *All that doe not receive should give*; the Servant, the Day-laborour, the Artificer, &c. should spare somewhat for the poor, the Servant that hath none to maintain but himself, may better spare somewhat for the poor than many House-keepers.

2 If God have not given thee ability to doe good, yet if thou hadst means wouldst thou bee liberal? why then know, that if there be in thee a willing mind, God will accept of the will for the deed, and of the *Affection*, where there is no ability for present *Action*; and if thou hast nothing else, yet *Da lachrymalam*, give a tear.

Deus coronat voluntatem ubi non invenit facultatem. Aug.

3 Obj. *The Poor have many faults, they are lewd, and lasie, unworthy, and unthankful, and can scarce afford us a good word for all that we doe for them?*

Ans. And hast thou none? Poor folks faults are easily seen, but men may see greater (if they will) in their Accusers, as Pride, Prodigality, Malice, Cruelty, Hard-heartedness, &c. It is the Poor, and not the sins of the Poor that they hate, for they can love Rich men that have worse sins in them than the poor have. Now, true hatred is against the whole kind, he that truly hates sin as sin, hates it where-ever he sees it, be it in the rich as well as in the poor, so that this is but a pretence to save their money.

2 Grant that they be unthankful, disobedient, &c. yet are not we so unto God? now if God feed us, though wee walk dis-ingeniously towards him, why should we harden our hearts against our poor brother?

3 We give, *Non homini sed humanitati, non peccatori sed pauperi*, We give not to the wicked man, to uphold him in his wickedness, but to supply his present wants.

4 Though their tongues should curse thee, yet their loyns will bless thee, *Job* 31. 20.

5 It is for Pharisees to look for the praise and thankes of men here, Gods people must look for their reward in heaven. This is our Seed-time, and though our Seed bee now buried, yet then it will arise; and though men thank us not now, yet then we shall have thanks before Men and Angels, our secret love and obedience shall have open acknowledgement and recompence, Christ himself will bee our Encomiast then, *Mat.* 25. 34, 35, 36.

6 Their

6 Their unthankfulness hurts themselves, not us; it is their sin, not thine. Wee must not fayl in our duty because they doe in theirs: Another mans Sin will not excuse mine. We may not be uncharitable because they be unthankful.

7 It is a good sign that our charity is sincere, when wee can give to those that revile us, and behave themselves unthankfully towards us. To give to those that give to us, Heathens will doe so; but to bless such as curse us, and feed such as hate us, and so overcome evil with good, this is truly Christian, *Rom.* 12. 21.

8 Suppose they be wicked, yet giving may better them, and thy kindness may melt them, and heap coals of fire upon their heads. The way to break a Flint is to lay it upon a soft pillow, *Rom.* 12. 20.

9 Though some poor people be wicked and unthankful, yet all are not so, we may not therefore punish all for the fault of some.

4 Obj. *I see many rich men give little or nothing, and therefore why should I give?*

Ans. 1. Few rich men are saved, Not many mighty, not many noble; *some*, but not *many* great men, are good men. We must therefore live by *Rule*, not by *Example*, especially of rich cormudgeons, who had as leive part with their blood as part with a penny to a pious use. Now the rule is, that all who are of ability should give, and shew compassion to their brethren, *Zech.* 7. 9. 1 *Cor.* 16. 2. *Let every one lay aside somewhat for the poor, as God shall prosper him, the command is universal*, without exception or restriction. *Rich men* indeed, who abound with worldly goods, and have not only for necessity, but variety and superfluity, those have a strict and severe charge given them, to be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate (1 *Tim.* 6. 17, 18.) now some rich men are rich in good works, as *Abraham*, *Job*, *Zacheus*, *Cornelius*, &c. and if you will needs follow rich men, follow the best, and honour the Lord with thy riches, and doe good with thy goods, remembring how uncertain they bee, (1 *Tim.* 6. 17.) they have wings, not of a Sparrow, but of an Eagle to fly aloft from us, *Prov.* 23. 5. improve them therefore to spiritual advantages whilst you have them, for as the ungodly poor are the most miserable, because they are doubly

παραγγέλλε *præcipe, denuntia*, Command and charge them in the name of the most High, &c.

doubly poor, both in soul and body; so merciful rich men are most happy, because they are doubly rich, viz. in wealth and good works. Besides, God hath given the poor a kind of interest in the rich mans store, *Non jus proprietatis, sed charitatis*, Hee hath a share in them though he may not be his own carver, *Prov.* 3. 27, 28. With-hold not good from him to whom it is due; that is, from thy poor Brother. When thou seest any in greater necessity than thy self, thou must to thy power succour them. The *Macedonians* themselves were but poor, yet when the Church was in distress, they gave beyond their ability. Many have been poor in goods, yet rich in good works; Christ himself in respect of Temporal riches was poor, he had not a house of his own to dwell in (*Matth.* 8. 20.) no Lands nor Livings, yet was he mindful of the poor, and gave bountifully to them, for he had a bag to succour the poor withall, *Joh.* 13. 29. The poor Widow gave all her substance, and is highly commended for it, for God looks not so much at the gift as the sincerity of the giver; hence shee is said to have given the greatest gift, because she gave it out of an enlarged, liberal heart; others gave out of their superfluity, but she out of her penury gave all that shee had, and so rested solely and singly upon the Promise; *John Baptist* commandeth him that hath two Coats, not only he that hath four or five, to part with one to the poor, *Luke* 3. 11. yea our Saviour calls sometimes for a cup of cold water, which puts us to no cost of heating (*Mat.* 10. 41.) which takes off all excuses whereby men would exempt themselves from giving.

Divitiæ superflua pauperi sunt necessaria, aliena retinet, qui ista tenet. Aug. in Ps. 147

In dando, animi qualitas potius spectatur, quàm eleemosynæ quantitas.

5 Ob. *I pay my Assesments to the Poor, and what would you have me doe more?*

Ans. The vilest of men pay what the Law compells them to give, but Gods people must do more than others. There are many modest poor House-keepers which have more need then many which the Law provides for, we must not therefore confine our selves to the Law, but as occasion requires, we must lend freely, help to redeem Captives, to raise poor men that have losses by fire, shipwrack, or that have a great charge of children; we must help to train up poor ingenious Children in Learning, and honest poor Couples that marry in the Lord, &c.

6 Obj. *I must provide against old age, sickness, &c.*

Ans. True, in a moderate way you must do so, as *Joseph* in the years of plenty did lay up against times of scarcity. But to provide excessively by Usury, cruelty, and unmercifulness to the poor, this is to provide a Curse for thy self, and not a blessing. By this means thou deprivest thy self of Gods provision; for as when we revenge our selves, God will not plead our Cause, so when we cark and care, and think by our own excessive, diffidencial providing to help our selves, we undoe our selves, for God will leave us to our selves.

7 Obj. *Wee pitty the Poor, and love them, we never took any thing from them?*

Ans. *Dives* who is now in Hell did not rob *Lazarus*, but because hee did not releeve him he was damned; so those reprobates, *Mat.* 25 42, 43.

See many more Cavils answered in Mr. *Bernard* of *Batcombes* Treatise of Charity, chap. 24. p. 434. and Mr. *Capel* on Tentat. Part. 3. Sect. 8. 319, &c.

2 Many doe hate the Poor, and tyrannize over them, and if there be so much love in their hearts, how comes so little to appear in their lives. He that hath a loving heart will have a bountiful hand, for love is bounciful. 2 *Cor.* 13. 4. it is in vain to boast of love unless we shew it in our works, *Jam.* 2. 16. 1 *Joh.* 3. 17, 18.

Now did men but consider who it is that askes, and what an honour it is to be his Almoners, and what profit comes by so doing, they would never excuse themselves as they doe, from this eminent duty.

We therefore that are the *Ministers* of Christ, observing the backwardness of our people to this necessary duty, should get the words of the wise, which are as Goads to rouse men out of their security; neither is it sufficient that wee only preach and press the duty, but we must (in our spheres and places) see that those precepts be put in practice according to the mind of Christ; the Deacons and Collectors must gather it, yet the Minister by counsel and advice should see to the right distributing of it. Hence the Apostles call upon *Paul* to remember the poor, which thing (saith he) I was diligent to doe, *Gal.* 2. 10. neither is it sufficient that wee direct our people, but by our *Practice* also we must lead them the way; so did *Paul*, himself did minister to the Saints at *Jerusalem*, (*Rom.* 15. 25. 28.) he doth not put off the duty to others, but himself leads them the way. People look more what wee doe,

doe, than what we say. Then we may preach and press it with more zeal and confidence on others, when we our selves doe goe before them in the duty, else they will quickly upbraid us, with a *Thou that teachest another to be merciful, art thou unmerciful?* Hence the best of men only have been the greatest pressors and promoters of this duty. How oft doth *Solomon* the wisest of men, by Precepts and Promises quicken us to this duty, *Prov.* 11. 24. & 19. 17. & 22. 9. & 28. 27. *Eccles.* 11. 1, 2. and Christ himself, a greater than *Solomon*, did both by Precepts, Promises, and Practice, incite his Disciples to this duty, *Matth.* 5. 7. 42. & 19. 25. & 25. 34, 35. *Luke* 13. 42. & 12. 33. *Acts* 20. 35. How oft did *Paul* press this duty upon the People in all his Epistles, 1 *Cor.* 16. 1, 2. & 2. 8. 7. & 9. 5. *Heb.* 6. 10. & 13. 16.? and gives a strict charge to *Timothy* (1 *Tim.* 6. 17, 18.) that he charge those that are rich, to be rich in good works. And the ancient *Fathers* the better to excite their people to works of Mercy, have written whole Books in the praise of it.

But since God looks more at the *manner* than *matter* of our duties, and loves Adverbs (as *Austin* hath it) better than Adjectives, hee lookes not so much *quam bonum*, how good the thing is, as *quam bene*, how well we doe it. I shall therefore give some directions for the right performance of it; for, *Modus rei cadit sub precepto*, God hath prescribed the *manner*, as well as the *matter* of our duties, according to that old saying,

Est modus in dando, quid, cur, cui, quomodo, quando.

Now he that will give *Rightly*, must

Give
1 Beleevingly.
2 Cheerfully.
3 Righteously.
4 Sincerely.
5 Speedily.
6 Sensibly.
7 Largely.
8 Discreetly.
9 Constantly.

1 WVe must give *beleevingly*, for without faith it is impossible to please God; our persons must please before our performances

formances can be acceptable, God had first respect to *Abel*, and then to his Offering. A wicked man may give an Almes, and doe an act which is materially good, but as it comes from him who is in rebellion against God, it is odious to him; for *the sacrifices of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord.* To make an action Morally good, three circumstances must concur. 1. The man must be *Righteous*, he must have both an imputed and imparted Righteousness. 2. He must doe righteous things. 3. He must doe them righteously. *Hee must be a Beleever, that will be a right Almes-giver*, for it is not the Almes of every one, but of a * beleeving *Abraham*, *Job*, *Zacheus*, *Barnabas*, &c. that is pleasing unto God. 2. Get faith to *beleeve the Promises.* God hath made many precious Promises to the merciful, it is meer unbelief that makes men question the truth of them, and this distrusting of God is the very root of all that unmercifulness that is in the world; if men did but beleeve that for one corn which they sow they should have an hundred, and that if they give rightly to the poor they should never lack, men would not sow so sparingly as they doe; get faith in the Promises, and this will loosen your hearts from these low enjoyments. Hee is rich who hath interest in the Promises, though hee hath nothing else in the world, for they are virtually every thing, they are better than money in our Purses, or bread in our Cupboards. Shall the Husband-man Plow, and Sow, in hope of a doubtful Crop, and the Merchant venture thorow many dangers at Sea, for uncertain Riches; and shall not wee venture to give, who are promised a sure reward?

* See Mr. *Watsons* Plea for Almes, p. 61

2 Give *cheerfully*; God loves a cheerful giver, hee prefers the willingness of the mind, before the worthiness of the gift, 2 *Cor.* 8. 11, 12. we must *be ready to distribute, willing to communicate*, Rom. 12. 8. 1 Tim. 6. 18. Free-will-offerings are most pleasing to God. that is the best Honey which flowes from the Comb without crushing, and the best Wine which comes from the Grape with least pressing. We should rejoyce when God calls us to works of Mercy, and honours us so farre as to be his Almoners upon earth; when men give grudgingly, and unwillingly, and give *Panem lapidosum*, a bit and a knock, they loose their almes. Unwilling obedience is no obedience; it must not be forced from us by Law, but flow

Si panem dederis tristis, & panem & præmium perdidisti.

from

from love, we must not only *doe* mercy, but *love* mercy, *Micah* 6. 8. Love is a bountiful affection, it thinks it can never doe enough for the party beloved; it is the weight which sets all the wheels of the Soul on going. When *David* had set his affections on God, then he thinks all the thousands that he gives to be as nothing, 1 *Chron.* 29. 3. Many give, but it is with much calling upon, and importunity, it should come like water from a Spring, freely and fluently; and it comes like fire from a flint, with much knocking; it comes from them as if you pluckt a Rib, a Leg, or an Arm from them. They should speak comfortably to the poor, and they give them hard words, and ugly looks, and so marre all.

3. Give *Righteously*; as we must love Mercy, so wee must doe justly, *Micha* 6. 8. we must give of our own goods justly gotten, not by oppression, theft, usury, &c. it must bee *Thy* bread (*Eccles.* 11. 1.) and not stollen from others by any indirect courses, *God hates* * *robbery for burnt-offerings*, Isa. 61. 8. wee may not rob *Peter* to cloath *Paul*, but if thou wilt honour the Lord, let it be with *thy* own riches, *Prov.* 3. 9. so did *Zacheus*, the one half of *my goods*, not of another mans doe I give to the poor, *Luke* 19. 8. *Job* warmes the poor with the fleece of *his owne* flock, *Job* 31. 20. Goods ill gotten call for *Restitution*, not for *distribution*. Our Almes must be not only Works of Mercy, but also of * Righteousness. Hence works of mercy are frequently called *Righteousness*, (*Psal.* 112. 9. *Prov.* 11. 18. *Dan.* 4. 24.) not only because it is just and righteous that we should part with some of our wealth to the poor, but also because it must be given of goods rightly gotten, and therefore those cruel men that rack Tenants, and inclose Commons to themselves, that oppress the Poor, and then when they dye build them an Almes-house; that steal the Goose, and then stick down a Feather; both they and their gifts are an abomination to the Lord.

* See Dyke on the Deceitf. of mans Heart, chap. 16. p. 209. & Mr. *Jacombs* Ser. on Mat. 5. 7 p. 33. & *Aquinas.* 2a. 2a. q. 32. Art. 7.

* *Minuitur census, sed augetur justitia; laudas mercatorem qui vendit plumbum, & acquirit aurum, & non laudas mercatorem qui erogat pecuniam & acquirit justitiam? Illud minuitur quod relicturus es, illud augetur quod in æternum possessurus es.* *Aug.* in Psal. 111.

4. *Sincerely*; not for any by or base ends, of Pride, Vainglory, Merit, or to be seen of men, but singly and sincerely that God may be glorified, *Matth.* 5. 16. & 6. 1. to 5. it is the

An act that is *materially* good, yet may bee *formally* evil, if not rightly circumstantiated.

the end that makes or mars an action, it is this that doth denominate; let the work be never so good, yet if the end bee Self, all is lost. The *Pharisees* did much, yet because they sought themselves, and not Gods glory, they lost the true reward. Give secretly, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth; the more we conceal our almes here, the more apparent will they be made at that great Day. Let us take no notice what we have given, how much, how oft, or to whom; let it content us, that though we forget our good works, yet God doth not, but our Father who sees in secret hee will reward us openly. Let us therefore *give in simplicity of spirit*, (*Rom.* 12. 8.) without any thoughts of merit, for what wee give is Gods, not ours, it is *of his own that we give unto him*. 1 *Chron.* 29. 14. 16. Heaven is Christs Purchase, and not ours, *Rom.* 6. *ult.* it is a gift, and what more free than gift?

See *Willets* Synopsis, Pap. contro. 19 Q. 1 p. 1065. *Edit. ult.*

In nullo gloriandum est quoniam nihil est nostrum. Cyprian.

Multa cadunt inter calicem supremaq; labra.

5 *Speedily.* A little given in time may doe more good than much given afterwards; delay is a kind of denial, and therefore we are commanded to be ready to distribute, and if wee can releeve our Brother now, we may not say to him, Goe, and come again to morrow, *Prov.* 3. 28. we know not what a day may bring forth, many things fall out between the cup and the lip; the man may be dead, or we may be disabled for giving. *Crasus* to day, may bee *Irus* to morrow; or the man may be put upon some desperate course of stealing, &c. when by seasonable giving we might have prevented his ruine. We should prevent mens sutes with our readiness, and not cause the eyes of the Widow to fayl with waiting, *Job* 31. 16. as the Sun communicates its Light freely, and God prevents us with his blessings, often giving us before we ask (*Psal.* 21. 13.) so should we deal with our poor brother.

Gratia ab officia quod mora tardat abest.

It is irksome to an ingenuous nature to stand craving and begging, and the Gift looseth a great part of its grace when we put off the Suppliant with delayes, such deferring, tormentes the soul, and makes it sick, *Prov.* 13. 12.

They also that put off giving *till they dye*, are much to bee blamed, those are men of good *wills*, but bad *deeds*; when they can keep their riches no longer, then they will give somewhat, not out of love to God, but for fear of Hell; as the Merchant doth cast his Goods into the Sea in a storm, for fear of drowning.

2 How

2 How dost thou know whether thou shalt have a *heart to give*, many that have wanted a hand in their life-time, want hearts when they come to dye, as we see in churlish, hard-hearted *Nabal*, 1 Sam. 25. 37, 38.

It will be our wisdome therefore in our health, and wealth, whilst we have time and opportunity to doe good to all, *Prov.* 3. 27, 28. *Gal.* 6. 10. it is good to make our own hands our own Executors, and our own eyes our own Over-seers; and not leave our substance to be disposed of by those who may sell it, misplace it, and abuse it.

2 Every thing is beautiful in its season, but our life-time is the fittest *season* for giving, whilst wee are full, and have somewhat to give, and whilst our brother wants. Almes is compared to *sowing* (*Psal.* 112. 9.) now the Husband man is very careful to observe the fittest season for the Seeding of his ground. He that puts off his works of charity till death, is like the man that puts off his sowing till Harvest-time, when he should reap. See Mr. *Watson on that text.*

3 It is more pleasing to God, and a more infallible evidence of a strong faith and affiance in him. God loves those best that trust in him most; now when a man can in his life-time part with his Goods to glorifie God, it is a good sign that he rests only upon Gods Promises and Providence, and not upon Creature-comforts. Let us then imitate the righteous man, who is ever merciful, and lendeth (*Psal.* 37. 26.) a wicked man may be sometimes merciful, or doe an act of mercy, but he is not constant in the duty, but usually puts it off till death; now as late repentance is seldome true, so *Eleemosyna sera est raro vera.* To quicken men to doe good in their life-time, I shall set down a notable president in our owne times, of one Mr. *Jones* a Citizen of *London*, who in his *life-time* gave above seven thousand pound amongst his poor Kindred, and fifty pound *per annum* to a Preacher at *Monmouth*, where he was born, and caused a house to bee built there with all convenient necessaries fit for a godly Minister. He erected a Free-school there in his life-time, and also built a fair house for the School-master, giving fifty pound yearly to the head School-master, and thirty pound *per annum* to the Usher for ever.

Hee also built an Hospital in the same Town (1610) for twenty

twenty poor people, allowing every one a Gown yearly, and two shillings six pence weekly, and gave about two thousand pound more to finish the work.

By his last Will and Testament hee gave five thousand pound, to be disbursed for the maintenance of a Preacher at *Newland* in *Glocester-shire*, and certain poor in that Parish.

He gave to the Company of *Haberdashers* in *London*, one thousand four hundred pound for the support of the Poor of that company. He left six hundred pound, and a fair house in the City of *London*, to bee distributed amongst the poor Preachers in *England*. He gave to the Hospitalls in *England* five hundred pound. To the poor in *Stoade*, two hundred pound.

To the poor in *Hanborough* one hundred pound.

To the Company of *Haberdashers* by way of thankfulness for their care taken, and to be taken, in the right managing of these acts of charity, he gave a considerable sum.

I have mentioned this at large, to shame the rich men of this age for their coldness, and aversness to works of Piety. VVhere, oh where shall we find such *Joneses* as this! He gave pounds, we give not pence; he gave thousands, we give not hundreds; hee erected Schools, and Hospitalls, he promoted Preachers, and Piety; when we are ready to pull down all. The zeal and piety of this good man will rise in Judgement against the Luke-warmness, and impiety of the men of this Generation.

See more presidents, in *Willets* Synopsis, Pap. p. 1220. *Edit. ult.*

6. *Sensibly and compassionately*, with a tender, pittiful-sympathizing-heart. We must not only pour out our riches, but our souls to the poor, *Isa.* 58. 10. we must have a sight and sence of their miseries within our selves, considering that they are flesh of our flesh, we are all of one and the same bloud, *Isa.* 58. 7. *Acts* 17. 26. as good hands made them as made thee, and as great a price was paid for their Redemption; and though thou mayest be his superiour in *Temporals*, yet he may excel thee in Spirituals, in faith, obedience, humility. Great reason therefore that we should put on bowels of mercy, *i. e.* all sorts of mercy, to soul, body, estate; give, lend, visit, cloath, counsel, comfort, and doe all that in us lyes for them, *Coloss.* 3. 12. The *good Samaritan* when he saw the misery of the

See Mr. *Jacombe* his Ser. at the *Spittle*, on Mat. 5. 7. p. 5. 6.

the man that fell amongst Theeves, hee took compassion on him, *Luke* 10. 33. *Job* wept for those that were in trouble, and his soul was in heavinesse for the poor, *Job* 30. 25. let a man give never so much, if he doe it with an upbraiding, insulting, and not with a compassionate spirit, it is abominable. It is a greater mercy to have a compassionate heart, than it is to give an Almes. A wicked man may give some of his Goods, but a compassionate man gives some of himself. To move compassion in us, 1. Let us put our selves into their cases, and make them our own. 2. Make use of thine *Eye*, that is one great means to work upon the heart; observe their poor fare, their tattered cloathing, their cold lodging, and feeble bodies. The Samaritan *saw* the Wounded man, and then hee had compassion on him; Christ *saw* the People as Sheep without a Shepherd, and had compassion on them. By this means we shall the better know the necessities of the poor, and how to suit our almes to their wants. This will make us thankful when we see how others lye on Straw, drink Water, want Cloathes to their backs, and bread for their Bellies, &c.

See this Point inlarged upon by M. *Nehem. Rogers* in the Good Samaritan, p. 112, &c.

7 *Largely*, and *liberally*. As *Araunah* gave to the King like a King, so should we give bountifully to works of mercy. A mean man must be *frugally liberal*, a man of an ordinary estate must be *moderately liberal*, but a rich man must be *magnificently liberal*, especially in great and extraordinary cases. A Christian must bee a man of a more excellent spirit, (*Numb.* 14. 24.) not of a sordid, low, ignoble spirit. Almes is compared to Sowing, which usually is done with a full hand; to encourage us, the Apostle adds a gracious Promise, that if we sow liberally we shall reap liberally, 2 *Cor.* 9. 6. We should therefore abound in this work of the Lord, and *bee merciful*, not as *Abraham*, or *Job* were merciful, but *as our heavenly father is merciful*. Now the Lord abounds in mercy to us, and so should we in our degree to others. We should not confine our Almes to an Easter-day, or a Christmas-Eeve, or a Communion-day, but be ready on all occasions for the duty; we should not give a penny, but a portion to the poor, *Eccles.* 11. 1, 2. *Cast thy bread*; that is, * all things necessary

* *Visito, poto, cibo, redimo, tego, colligo, cando. Ad corpus. Consule, castiga, solare, remitte, fer, ora. Ad animam referuntur. Aquinas secunda, secunda, q.* 32. *art.* 2. *ubi plura.*

for thy poor Brothers support, cast it franckly and freely without grudging or repining at him; but then it must bee *Thy* bread, got by thy lawful labour; cast it on the Waters, that is, upon the Poor; and though it may seem to be lost, as that which is thrown down the River, yet after many dayes wee shall find it. 1. Sometimes in this life we shall have an hundred fold. The *Shunamite* that entertained the Prophet had a Son. The Widow of *Sarepta* by succouring the Prophet had an increase of her Oyl. 2. Sometimes to the Posterity, when the fathers dead, then the Child hath favour shewed him, *Psalm* 112. 3. 3. Sometimes not till the Resurrection, *Luk.* 14. 13 we should therefore give a portion to seven, and also unto eight; that is, *unto many*, for *Bonum quo communius eò melius*, the more communicative our goodness is, the better.

Obj. *But we know not what evils may come upon us, and therefore we will save?*

Sol. Nay therefore give (saith *Solomon*) whilst thou hast any thing to give, before all be gone, for *thou knowest not what evils shall be upon the earth.* Sad times may come, and then those that have been bountiful to others, shall finde bounty from others; and as they have metred to others, so God will raise up some to mete unto them again. Wee see the Wheel turns round, and those that have been on the top, as *Bajazet* and *Belisarius*, have been brought to the bottom; we should therefore improve our Talent while we have it, to our Masters praise. God hath much dishonour done him by miserable, unmerciful men; we should help to take off those dishonours by our pious, merciful, and munificent walking; they instead of giving bountifully, give basely to the poor, mouldy-bread, stinking meat, that one would scarce give to Doggs; yea their horses many times have more and better Corn than poor wanting Christians. If base offerings were abhorred of *Davids* soul, how much more are such sordid gifts abhorred of Gods soul.

8 *Discreetly*, according to our estate and abilities, and proportionable to our neighbours necessities. Rich men must give like rich men, and poor men must doe as they can. Thus *Acts* 11. 29. when the godly were in distress, the Church resolves to send them relief according to their ability. We must so give to one, that we doe not disable our selves from giving

Non debent esse fundi opes, sed dispensari. Ambros.

to others. Though few offend on this hand, yet it is better and safer offending in the excess and giving too much, than too little. The *Macedonians* are commended for giving beyond their ability, 2 *Cor.* 8. 3. The *poor Widow* had rather want her self, than bee wanting to others; and in the Primitive times they sold all that they had to supply the Churches necessities, *Acts* 2. 45. & 4. 34. But ordinarily the measure of our almes must be regulated according to our estates; this is to order our affairs with discretion, *Psal.* 112. 5. according to the ability wherewith God hath blest us, we must lay aside somewhat for the poor, 1 *Cor.* 16. 2. Divines conclude, that the tenth part of our comings in ought to be set apart, by way of thankfulness for pious uses; upon this account *Jacob* vowed the tenth to God, *Gen.* 28. *ult.* Hence we read not only of the *Levites* Tenths, but of Tenths for the *Poor*, (Deut. 14. 28, 29.) and to these Tenths the text alludes; and if the *Jewes* who had so many Sacrifices to offer, and Tenths to pay, yet must give another Tenth to the Poor; shall not wee that are freed from those Ceremonial burdens, be much more bounsiful?

Benefaciendum est omnibus, secundum tamen debitas loci & temporis circumstantias. Aquinas secunda secundæ, q. 31. art. 2.

2. Wee must be discreet, in respect of *the persons to whom wee give*; though we are bound to give to all that are in extream necessity, *Luke* 6. 30. *Give to every one that asketh*, viz. if he be truly in need, and thou art able to releeve him. But especially we must succour the *godly poor*, and communicate to the Saints necessities, *Gal.* 6. 10. we must give unto them *Majore affectu & effectu*, with greater love, and greater bounty; *Joseph* shewed kindness to all his Brethren, but *Benjamin* whom he loved had a five-fold mess. Those are near and dear to God, and so they should be to us. They oft meet with hard usage from the world, and therefore we are commanded to supply (what in us lies) their necessities, *Rom.* 12. 13. Next to those our *poor Kindred*, and the poor of our own Town must be releeved, *Deut.* 15. 7. and then *Strangers*, though they be farre distant, *Gal.* 2. 10. yea *enemies*, if they be in want must be fed by us, 2 *King.* 6. 21, 22. *Mat.* 5. 44. *Rom.* 12. 20.

Only such as are lusty, wandring Beggers, that are able to work, but are lazie and will not, wee must take heed of releeving such, unless they bee in extream necessity, and

that with admonition. There are two sorts of Poor in the world,

1 Impotent Poor, of Gods making.
2 Impudent Poor, of the Devils making.

Pasce fame morientem, quia si non paveris occidisti. Ambros.

1 Impotent poor, when God by Sickness, Fire, Shipwrack, Persecution, great charge of Children, Old age, &c. such poor whose work is done, must bee succoured by us, *Levit.* 25. 35.

2 But Impudent poor, who are talkative, brazen-faced, idle, dissolute, and disordered; correction is the best almes for such as can work and will not. A rod is fittest for the back of such fools.

1 God hath expressly said, *He that will not labour shall not eate*; it is not, he that is sick and cannot, but he that is able and will not labour shall rot and perish, 2 *Thess.* 3. 10. *Prov.* 20. 4.

2 Such as maintain them in this idleness sin against the good Lawes of the Land.

3 Against the Law of Nature, which teacheth every man by his industry to provide for his own.

4 They are Theeves, and eate up that which should maintain the true poor.

5 By a constant releeving of them, you maintain them in their idle trade, harden them in their sin, and so become accessary to all their abominations.

6 The Godly that have been very tender to other kind of poor, yet have been very terrible to these. *Job* that was eyes to the blinde, yet made these to run and hide themselves, *Job* 30. 3, 4, 5. *Paul* condemns them for their disorderly walking, and commands us to with-draw from such, 2 *Thess.* 3. 6. 10. 14. They are *the Devils Nursery, and Seminary*, out of which hee chuseth some for Theft, some for Bastards, some for Murderers, and all manner of villany. Hence *Plato* (one of the wisest Heathens) allowed not any Beggets in his conceited Common-wealth, as being a great blemish and dishonour to it.

3 We must be discreet in shunning the causes of Poverty, which disable us from works of Mercy.

The first is *Idleness*, this wasts and consumes the estate, so that in a short time a man cannot help himself, much less others.

thers. Idleness and uncharitableness were *Sodoms* Sins, *Ezek.* 16. 49. the vertuous Woman is commended for her liberality to the poor, but what inabled her for it, why shee seeks for Wool, and Flax, and worketh willingly with her hands, *Prov.* 31. 13, 14, 20.

2 *Intemperance*, in eating, drinking, pleasures, and pastimes, &c. when men shall give five pound for a Dogge, ten pound for a Hawk, twenty pound for a Horse, and forty pound spent on a Whore, and hundreds in Drink and Tobacco, when men shall thus make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts of it, no wonder if such cannot help others, when they have beggered themselves, *Prov.* 21. 17. & 23. 21.

3 *Familiarity* with lewd Women, the Harlot will bring a man to a morsel of bread, and will quickly root out all a mans increase, *Job* 31. 12.

4 *Pride*; when ordinary building will not serve, sumptuous building breeds sorry-house-keeping; So pride in Apparel eates up charity; when men have such large *Items* for Silk, for Satten, for Laces, for Ribbands, &c. when men shall carry Woods and Lordships on their backs, no wonder if they have nothing for the poors bellies. As B. *Jewel* complained sometimes, that he had no Benefices to bestow on good men, for *Capon* his Predecessor had devoured them all; so these have nothing for the Poor, for Dr. *Pride* hath devoured all.

5 *Rash Suerti-ship* hath disabled many, and therefore *Solomon* so oft cautions us against it, *Prov.* 6. 1, 2, 3. & 11. 15.

9 Give *constantly*. In the morning let us sow our Seed, and in the evening let us not hold our hand. Let us never bee weary of well-doing, for in due time we shall reap if we faint not; so long as there are poor to be releeved, and we have goods to releeve them withall, we should be distributing amongst them; now the poor we shall have alwaies with us, so long as the world endures, so long the poor shall endure, and therefore we must still be sowing. As God is alwayes succouring us, so should we alwaies be succouring our Brethren. As he renewes his mercy to us every morning, so should we renew our bounty; we must ever be following that

which is good, 1 *Thess.* 5. 15. *Job* was addicted to it from his youth, and in his old age he practised it, *Job* 31. 18. As the Husband-man thinks it not sufficient that hee hath sowen his ground in former years, but he continues his sowing to the end of his dayes; so must wee in this Spiritual sowing, our last dayes must be our best dayes, and our works more at the last than at the first, *Revel.* 2. 19. *Constancy* is one ingredient that helps to make an action Morally good: It must bee done *Scienter*, *Volenter*, *Constanter*; first we must know our duty, and then perform it cheerfully and constantly; and this serves to distinguish between the charity of the Hipocrite and the godly, the one gives by starts and fits, when the wind of praise, and the weight of profit moves them; but the righteous doth righteously at all times, and that from a Principle of life, and habit of grace within.

Hee that would see more, may peruse *Drexelius De Eleemosyna*, *Tassin* on *Amendment*, p. 121, &c. *Synopsis Purior is Theolog. Disput.* 37. p. 473. *Trapp* at the end of his Comment on *N. T.* p. 1049. folio, *Clerks* Mirror, chap. 19. p. 63. folio, Mr. *Wheatly*'s Poor mans Advocate, Dr. *Harris* on Matth. 5. 7. *Perkins* Cases of Conse. lib. 3. c. 5. p. 245. &c. folio, *Church* his Treasury, p. 283. & Miscellanies, p. 87. *Byfields* Marrow, p. 584. *Capel* on Tentat. p. 319. Mr. *John Downame* Plea for the Poor. Mr. *Bernard* of *Bacombs* Way to Good Works, *Watsons* Serm. on Psal. 112. 9. *Grevill* on Ezek. 16. 49. & *inster omnium Binchius mellificium Theolog.* Loc. 15. p. 230. *part* 3a. Mr. *Jacombs* Ser. at the Spitle, on Mat. 5. 7.

Verse 5.

And offer a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving with leaven, and proclaim and publish the free-Offerings, for this liketh you, O yee Children of Israel, saith the Lord.

IN this Verse the Prophet continues his Sarcasm, and bids the *Israelites* goe on in their superstitious practices, imitating Gods people in their choyest Sacrifices, *viz.* in their Eucharistical, Votive, Free-will-offerings; but withall he lets them know, though this please them, yet it displeaseth God, as appears by those several Judgements which hee had already

already laid upon them, and yet further threatens against them.

Offer a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving with leaven; q. d. imitate Gods people, who in their Sacrifices of praise did offer leavenned bread according to the Law (*Levit.* 7. 13.) so doe yee in the VVorship of your Idols, what Gods people did holily at *Jerusalem* to the true God, that doe yee hypocritically at *Bethel* and *Gilgal*, to your false gods.

Q. *But here a doubt ariseth, whether this people did sin in offering leaven with their Sacrifices of Thanksgiving?*

A. Some learned men conceive they did sin, and that their Sacrificing here with leaven was contrary to the Law, *Levit.* 2. 11. But as learned men on the other side say, they did not sin in so doing; for though the Lord did forbid leaven in other Sacrifices (*Levit.* 2. 11.) yet in Eucharistical and Thank-offerings, as here, they might bring leavened bread, *Levit.* 7. 13. The Lord therefore doth not blame them here for offering with leaven, for himself had so appointed it, and in these external circumstantials they were very diligent; but the Lord blames them because they offered those Sacrifices of praise which were due to him, to their Idols, and that in the Temple of Idols. *Vide Planius Pistator. in Amos* 4. 5. *in Scholiis.*

Q. *But why did the Lord forbid leaven in other Sacrifices, and yet command it in Eucharistical ones?*

A. Sundry Reasons might be given.

1 The Lord might enjoyn it, to intimate unto us the due preparation of our hearts before we praise him; for so wee finde *Leaven* to be used, sometimes in Scripture in good part, for the secret working, preparing, and fitting of the Dough for baking, making it rise and heave, which else would bee sad and heavie (*Mat.* 13. 33.) so doth Gods Spirit prepare and raise our spirits in love and thankfulness to God for his mercies, *Psal.* 108. 1. to 6.

2 To teach us to temper our joys with sorrow, and in all our approaches to God in this duty, to rejoyce with trembling, *Psal.* 2. 11. Hence the Passeover was to bee eaten with sower herbs.

3 Or else to signifie to us his gracious acceptation of our praises, though mixt with the leaven of many infirmities.

4 To mind them (say some) of their deliverance from those

those things which are set forth by leaven, *viz.* false Doctrin, Hypocrisie, Prophannes, and the like.

Proclaime and publish the Free-offerings, *q. d.* though you bring your Sacrifices to me every morning and evening, according to my Commandement, and though yee offer other Sacrifices on your Feastival-dayes, yea and though yee adde to them all Voluntary-oblations, solemnized with great pomp and Majesty; yet all this is but adding sin to sin, it is a burden, and an abomination to me, because not done in that place, and by those Priests which I have ordained for that work. Those Voluntary-free-will-offerings we read of, *Levit.* 7. 16. & 22. 18, *Numb.* 15. 3. *Deut.* 12. 17. these were commanded by Law, and these the *Israelites* did imitate. These they did *publish and proclaime* by publick authority, with great pomp and solemnity, being very curious in Ceremonies, but careless in substantials; yet for the better clearing of this Point, wee must know, that those Free-will-offerings were a kind of Peace-offerings for some Blessings received: of which we finde three sorts:

Kiru, vocata ecclesiam & cœlum populi ad offerandum victimas & alias oblationes.

Some were
1 Eucharistical.
2 Votive.
3 Voluntary.

1 Some were *Sacrifices of Thanksgiving* and praise, for some Blessings already received, as recovery from Sickness, victory over Enemies, success in a Journey; for blessings of the Feild, of the Wombe, &c. they were to come to the Holy place, and bring a Bullock, or the like, and offer it as a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving to God, for those mercies received, *Levit.* 7. 11, 12, 13.

2 There were *Votive Sacrifices*, which were joyned with Prayer for a blessing upon their undertakings; or as others say, for the performance of some Vow made upon the obtaining of some special blessing from God, *Lev.* 7. 16.

3 The *Free-will-offering* was of meer Devotion, when a man was not tied either by general or special obligation, (*Levit.* 7. 16,) either of Mercies received, or of the want of any blessing; but of Devotion in general, by way of acknowledging Gods goodness to them in the general, and testifying their desire of the continuance of his love and favour to them,

them; *For this pleaseth you, or, this yee love, O yee Children of Israel, saith the Lord.* What the Prophet had spoken before Ironically, now he speaks plainly without a Figure, and shews that he did not exhort them to doe such things, but shews what things they delighted to doe, and therefore hee bids them goe on, and take what they get; you love to have it so, but you consider not what will be the end thereof, *Jer. 5. ult.* q. d. *This kind of sacrifice may please you, who have made your own wills your rule, delighting your selves in outward shewes and Ceremonies; but it is displeasing unto me, though you love to have it so, yet I hate your doings, and require no such things at your hands. My Sacrifices I expect at* Jerusalem, *yet you think any prophane place will serve turn; you should have consulted my Law, and my Messengers, and observed what pleased me; but you have despised my Law, and despited my Messengers, and followed your own inventions to your own confusion; go on therefore in these your rebellious practices, and perish.*

Ahabtem, dilaxistis, from Ahab, *dilexit, thorum habuit.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Hipocrites are very strict in observing outward Ceremonies and Circumstances, but very negligent in fundamentals and substantials.* They strain at a Gnat, yet swallow a Camel; they have a form of godlinesse, but they have not the power of it; they may have their morning and evening Sacrifices, they may pay Tithes, bring Eucharistical and Free-will-offerings, and goe as farre in outward performances as (if not further then) the people of God, and yet for want of sincerity bee nothing. Ignorance and impudence, gain, and applause of men, will carry men a great way. Most mens religion now adaies lies in censuring of others, in holding some seemingly strict Opinions, and high-flown Notions beyond the rule; in disputing and questioning every thing, but beleeving nothing. The Scribes and Pharisees, what adoe did they make about Tything of Mint, and Cummin, and Annise; but the weighty matters of the Law lay unregarded; these forget that obedience is better than sacrifice. Thus our perfect Pharisees the *Quakers*, how precise seeme they in their words, even beyond the rule; What adoe doe they make about *Pulpits, Hour-glasses,*

Vide Dyke on the Heart, p. 29 & p. 110.

glasses, Churches, Steeples, Bells, Gownes, Cloaks, Laces, Fringes, Hatbands, making of Leggs, Curchies, Titles of Honour, &c. and yet these Atheistical Libertines, whose Religion is meer Irreligion, make no bones of Blasphemy, Heresie, Lying, Equivocating, Rayling, Witch-craft, &c. God will smite such gross Hipocrites.

2 Obs. *Sacrifices of praise are due only to God.* The Lord was here greatly displeased with *Israel*, for offering their Sacrifices of praise to their Idols, which were due to him. As it was their Sin that they spent the silver and the gold which God had given them, in the service of *Baal* (*Hos.* 2. 8.) so to give the calves of their lips (as Praises are called, *Hos.* 14. 2.) as well as the calves of their stalls to Idols, must needs be a God-provoking sin. As all our Blessings come from him, so it is great reason that all our Praises should bee given to him. This hath ever been the practice of the Saints, *Psal.* 56. 12. & 93. 30. 33. & 107. 22. *Jonah* 2. 9. and is oft commanded, *Psal.* 50. 14, 15. *Ephes.* 5. 20.

3 Obs. *God delighteth in Free-will offerings.* The Prayers and Praises that we offer unto God must be voluntary, ingenuous, free, *Exod.* 25. 2. 1 *Chron.* 28. 9. *Esa.* 1. 19. 2 *Cor.* 8. 12. *Christ* saved us willingly (*Psal.* 40. 6, 7.) and therefore we should serve him willingly; yea the *Angels* which are more noble Creatures than we, yet serve God willingly, *Psal.* 103. 20. we must resemble them, yea the unreasonable creatures delight to serve God, *Psal.* 19. 5.

Compulsive obedience is no obedience; the service wee perform to God must have three ingredients in it, it must bee done *Scienter, Volenter & Constanter.*

1 Our service must be reasonable service, for blind obedience is no obedience, *Rom.* 12. 1.

2 It must be performed *cheerfully* and willingly, for as God loves a cheerful Giver, so he loves a cheerful Hearer, a cheerful Prayer, and a cheerful observer of his Sabbaths, *Isa.* 58. 15. It was Prophesied, that in Gospel times Gods people should be *willingnesses* in the abstract and Plural Number, that is, they should bee a prompt People, that are even composed as it were of willingness, so ready should they bee to worship him, *Psal.* 110. 3.

Populus spontaneitatum, i.e. *summem spontaneus. Heb.*

3. In

3 It must be * *constant*, we must not only doe righteousness at sometimes, but at all times, *Psal.* 106. 3.

* See more in Mr. *Burgess* Spi. Refining 1 Part, *Serm.* 91. p. 542. See ten Qualifications of Obedience in Mr. *William Shepherds* Treat. of Sincerity, p. 198. &c.

4 Obs. *Idolatry is marvellous pleasing to our corrupt natures.* Men love to have it so, *Jer.* 5. *ult.* Corrupt Principles suit well with our corrupt hearts. Hence it is that men are said to be wedded to their Idols, *Hos.* 4. 17. those *they love and serve, and seek to worship*, Jer. 8. 2. this makes multitudes goe after the Whore with her bewitching, alluring golden Cup, *Revel.* 13. 3. on this side Hell there is not a sorer Judgement, than thus to be given up to our own corrupt affections.

V. Weems on the second Com. chap. 7. p. 85.

Verse 6.

And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your Cities, and want of bread in all your places; yet have yee not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

When God would convert a People, he useth Blessings and Curses, Mercies and Judgements, one or both of which usually work upon all ingenuous natures, *Levit.* 26. *Deut.* 28. & 30. 1, 2. God had tried all conclusions upon this people, he had tried to reclaime them by Mercies, (*Amos* 2. 9, 10, 11. & 3. 2.) but these being ineffectual, he now tries what Judgements will doe; and therefore sends his three Arrowes of Famine, Pestilence, and Sword amongst them to convert them (if it might be) and not to destroy them, as appears by that Emphatical Epistrophe annexe to every punishment; *yet have yee not returned unto me, saith the Lord.* Not only his Mercies, but his Menaces; not only his favours, but his frownes and rods were all ineffectual upon the hearts of this impenitent people. As a tender father will use all means to reclaime his rebellious Son, so God had used all means to reclaim this People from their Idolatry, and Apostacy, but all in vain, for they were so wedded to their lusts, that they had rather lose their Land and Lives than part with them; so that this is the third Sin which the Lord

by his Prophet chargeth them withall, viz. *Obstinacy and incorrigibleness*; no cords of love could draw them, nor judgements drive them. The Lord had wasted all his *rods* on them in vain, five or six he mentions here, *viz.*

1 Famine.
2 Drought.
3 Blasting.
4 Mildew.
5 Plague.
6 Sword.

But they were so farre from returning, that they grew worse and worse, and therefore the Lord resolves to make a final end with them. In this Verse we have,

1 A Judgement executed, and that is *Famine*, which is Paraphrastically set forth by *cleanness of teeth*, and is exegetically explained in the next Clause, by want of Bread, and provision, *I have given you cleanness of teeth*, what is that? why *want of bread in all places*; when men have nothing to eat, their teeth are clean, nothing adheres to them to foul them. In the precedent Verse the Lord tells us what pleased *Israel*, viz. Sin, and now hee tells us what pleased him, *viz.* to punish them for their sin; as they had abused their food like fat Beasts, to luxury and riot, so now they should fast for it; and *I also have given you*, or *therefore have I given you cleanness of teeth*; it is a suitable Judgement that unclean hearts and lives should be punisht with, cleanness of teeth. This Judgement was in part fulfilled in *Elijahs* and *Elishaes* dayes, when in *Ahabs* reign there was a three years famine, 1 *King.* 17. & 18. & 2 *King.* 6. 25. & 8. 1. and in the dayes of King *Joram*, for the Idolatry that then reigned, 2 *King.* 4. 38. yet some conceive that the Prophet here speaks of some latter famine which was then fresh in their memories.

Est Periphrasis famis & inopiæ.

The Vulgar following the Septuagint render it *Stuporem dentium*, but corruptly, for the word is *Nikion, & significat munditiem & vacuitatem dentium, cum dentes vacui sint à cibo.*

2 Here is the *Extent*, or Universality of this Judgement, the famine was not in one or two, but *in all their Cities, and in all places.*

3 Here is the effect which this Judgement had upon them, viz. It was ineffectual; *yet have yee not returned to me, saith Lord.* Their hearts were so hardned, and they so indurate in sin, that they were become incorrigible, and incurable; they were

were Judgement-proof, no chastning could work upon them. *Yet have yee not, &c.* This *yet* shewes that there was great reason why God should expect their return, and that hee had done that which in all probability might have caused them to return, when he sent these Judgements on them; therefore God inculcates, and oft repeats this sentence, *Yet have yee not returned unto me, saith the Lord*; as being greatly troubled that his corrections had no better operations on them; when even *Phrygians* and *Barbarians* are bettered by blows, yea the dull Asse is quickned by the Rod, and the heavie Oxe by the Goad.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Famine is one Judgement which God sends upon impenitent Sinners*; VVhen God is greatly incensed against a People, then he sends the Famine, which he calls one of his four sore Judgements, *Ezek.* 14. 21. it is an Arrow which he shoots against a People of his wrath, *Ezek.* 5. 16. The Lord can no sooner call for a Famine, but like a faithful Servant it presently obeys, 2 *King.* 8. 1. hee called for a Famine, and it came upon the Land seven years, *Psal.* 105. 16. when it comes in extremity it is very sad; hence it is called the *terrible* Famine, *Lam.* 5. 10. This will appear in seven particulars.

1 It makes men *unnatural*, and cruel, even to their neerest Relations, as Wife and Children. Nature bindes a man to tender and pitty these, yet in time of Famine, we read of Mothers eating their own Children, 2 *King* 6. 28, 29. *Jer.* 14. 9. *Lam.* 4. 10. this Curse the Lord threatens against disobedient ones, *Deut.* 28. 53. 56. 57.

2. It is a *lingring, languishing death*, other Judgements cut men off suddenly, but this consumes a man as it were peece-meal, *Lam.* 4. 9. *They that are slain with the Sword are better than they that are slain with hunger*; Why so? *for these pine away for lack of sustenance.*

3 It makes men faint and feeble, and so unfits men for the Service of God in their calling, *Gen.* 47. 13. they *faint* by reason of the famine. Hence Bread is called the *staffe, stay, and strength of our natures* (*Levit.* 26. 26. *Psal.* 105. 16.

Isa. 3. 1. *Ezek.* 4. 16.) take a Staffe from a weak man and he falls to the ground.

4 It makes men howl and lament (*Hos.* 7. 14. *Joel* 2. 11) yea *rage and be mad*, Isa. 8. 21.

5 Hunger *burns like a fire*, which is a most terrible element, it wasts the radical moysture, *Deut.* 32. 24. *Jeremy* describing the Famine in *Jerusalem*, tells us, that their face was black like a Coal, and their skin was black like an Oven, because of the terrible Famine (*Lam.* 4. 8. & 5. 10.) when the *Calor nativus* hath nothing to feed upon, it consumes the *Humidum radicale*, and so the man dyes.

6 It brings *Poverty* with it, now extream Poverty is a sore Judgement, and puts men upon desperate attempts, as robbing, killing, &c. *Prov.* 6. 30. & 30. 8, 9. it makes rich men poor, and forceth them to sell their Land, Cattel Goods, Cloath, &c. *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life.* The *Egyptians* sold all that they had to *Joseph* for bread, and when all was gone they sold themselves, *Gen.* 47. 18.

7 It is usually attended with other Judgements, as Sword and Plague, such great Judgements seldome goe alone, *Jer.* 14. 15, 16. & 24. 10. *Ezek.* 7. 15. & 14. 21.

Let us then fly from sin, which turns that God, who is mercy and pitty it self, into fire and fury, and provokes him to send such terrible Judgements on his people. Especially take heed of four sins.

1 *Intemperance*, Drunkenness and Gluttony bring the famine on a Land, Abuse of plenty loseth plenty, when men rise early to follow strong drink, then their honourable men are famished, *Isa.* 5. 11, 12, 13. *Joel* 1.

2 *Covenant-breaking*; when there was a three years Famine in the dayes of *David*, hee inquired of the Lord what was the ground of it; the answer was, that it was for *Saul*, and for his bloudy house, because he slew the *Gibeonites*, contrary to Covenant confirmed by an oath, *Josh.* 9. 7. 15. 18. 2 *Sam.* 21. 1. *Jer.* 34. 17, 18.

3 *When men spend the strength which they receive from the Creature, in the service of the Devil*, consuming them upon their lusts, or in sacrificing to Idols, as the *Israelites* did here, they served *Baal* with the Corn and Wine which God had given them, therefore God took it from them.

4 *Con-*

4 *Contempt of the Word, the wayes and Worship of God.* God oft punisheth our abuse of Spiritual food with the want of Corporal, They that hate his Messengers shall dye by the Famine, *Jer.* 11. 21, 22. so when men preferre their own interests before Gods, and can dwell themselves in seiled houses, but the House of the Lord must lye wast, this brings a Curse upon their Crops and Labours, *Hag.* 1. 6. 9. 10. & 2. 17. 18, 19.

See more Sins in *Mellif. Theolog, Binchius,* Loc. 12. P. 2. p. 140. & D. *Gouge* his Arrows, p. 2. p. 139, &c. *Topsel* on *Joel,* p. 119. & 213. *Clerks* Mirrour, chap. 51.

2 Since it is the Lord that sends cleanness and want of bread amongst us, let us be *patient* under it, let us be dumbe and silent because the Lord hath done it. There is no evil in the City of this kind especially, but the Lord is the Author and orderer of it, it comes not by Accident, but by Divine appointment, it is the Lord that sends Famines to Cities and Kingdoms; and the rather we should bee patient, when we consider that our Famines are nothing to what our sins deserve. 2 Nothing comparatively, when we consider the seven years Famine in *Egypt*, when for five years together there was neither Earing nor Harvest, *Gen.* 41. 40. & 45. 6. In the three years Siege of *Samaria*, the people within did eat their own Children, and fed upon Dung, (2 *King.* 6. 25. 28. 29.) an Asses head was sold for eighty peeces of Silver, which is ten pound in our coyn; and the fourth part of a Kab of Doves dung for five peeces of Silver, now a Kab contained four pound and five ounces, and the fourth part was thirteen ounces, and for this they gave ten shillings and upward. But no famine was like *Jerusalems* famine, as wee may see in the *Lamentations* of *Jeremy*, when the Children cried for bread and there was none to give them, those that were cloathed in Scarlet embraced the Dung-hill, their beautiful *Nazarites* were blacker than Coals, and the pittiful Mothers became Butchers of their own Children. As the Lord said to his people, *Goe to Shiloe*, so say I, Go to *Germany*, and to *Rochel*, and consider what God hath done to them for their Sins, there you shall see Doggs, Cats, and Rats sold in the Markets, and men and women fighting for them. There you shall see Women eating their own Children, the living feeding upon the dead, and digging up dead Corps out of their Graves that they might feed upon them. Beggers coming to doors have been killed and eaten, yea the skins of Horses, Sheep,

In the Siege of *Rochel*, 1628. there died of the Famine sixteen thousand persons, an Egge was sold for 8 s. a pint of Milk 30 s. a Bushel of Wheat 20 l. a pound of Butter 30 s, &c. See Book of Martyrs 3 Vol. in fine, p. 73, 74. Edit. ult.

Sheep, and Oxen, have been their food; let us take heed lest *Germanies* Heresies, Blasphemies, Apostacies, Drunkenness, &c. be found in *England*, lest *Germanies* Plagues come hither also. O let us be an obedient people, let us not fight against God with his own blessings, nor abuse his plenty to his dishonour, but serve him with gladness of heart in the abundance of all things, for it is Piety that breeds plenty, *Psa.* 81 12, 13. *Isa.* 1.19. if there bee but a sincere will and desire to obey, we shall eate the good of the Land, and in time of famine wee shall be fed, *Psal.* 33.19. & 34.10. & 37.19. *Job* 5. 20. *Prov.* 10. 3. *Isa.* 33. 15, 16.

Fides famem non formidat, Hieron.

2 Live *by faith*, and then in an holy security at destruction and famine you may laugh, *Job* 5.22. Faith answereth all distrustful cares and feares, as *Abraham* did in another case, *God will provide.*

Obj. *But thou mayest dye by the Famine?*

A. True faith faith, and that is best of all for me, for that will free me from sin, and from all the miseries that attend it. He cannot dye ill that lives well, let him dye by Famine, Sword, Pestilence, or whatever Disease, yet if he dye in the Lord, in his fear and favour, he is blessed, *Revel.* 14. 13. Though the Fig-tree should not blossom, yet a beleever can rejoyce in the Lord in the want of all (*Hab.* 3. 17.) hee knowes that the Lord can bless a little, and make the Widdows meal to increase by spending, 1 *King.* 17. 17. he knows that God can put vertue and nourishment into the Creature, and make us walke in the strength of one meal for many dayes together; as he did *Elijah*, who went forty dayes together in the strength of one dinner; or if he take away our meat (as the Martyr said) he will take away our appetite also; *Man lives not by bread only, but by every word of God, Mat.* 4. 4.

See Mr. Trapp on Mat. 4. 4.

2 Obs. *God payes Sinners many times in their own coyn.* As men deal with others, so God deals with them. These Idolatrous *Israelites* kept Gods faithful Ministers hungry, and spent all on Idols, and false Prophets, and now God keeps them hungry; they like fat Beasts were luxurious, and abused their food, and now they shall be kept short, and want food; they abused their Wine, and now they shall want Water; and though Great men many times escape in times of famine,

famine, yet God can smite them with such Diseases, that they shall neither eate nor drink, *In quo quis peccat, in eo punitur.* *Absolon* that was proud of his hair, at last it became an Halter that helpt to hang him; *David* that abused anothers bed, hath his own bed defiled by *Absolon*, who lay with his Concubines; when he proudly numbred the people, hee lost them by the Pestilence; so *Hezekiah* that was lifted up with his Treasures, lost them, *Isa.* 39. 5. Such is our corruption that weeseldome know the worth of Mercies till we want them, *Carendo potius quam fruendo*, when wee want food, health, wealth, peace, and the Gospel of Peace, then wee begin to know the price of these mercies.

3 Obs. *The principal end that God aimes at in our corrections, is our conversion.* He corrects us for our profit, that wee might be partakers of his Holiness, *Heb.* 12. 10. he sent the Famine on this People, that so they might return unto him. This is his special end, *Job* 33. 19. to 28. & 36. 8, 9. *Psal.* 94. 12. & 119. 71. *Luke* 15. 14. to 30. wee should not therefore lose the benefit of our Afflictions, nor frustrate Gods end in correcting us, but say with the Martyr, *Lord doe thou heat, and I will bend.* As the Apostle saies of Patience (*Jam.* 1. 4.) *Let patience have its perfect work*; that is, let it be sincere, and endure to the end; so say I of Repentance, let it not be a half turn, or make you howl as the Famine did those *Israelites* (Hos. 7. 14.) but let his rods bring us home fully to himself, that we may return to him with all our hearts, and then we shall be happy.

See Mr. *Dyke* on Afflictions, p. 342. &c. at the end of his Com. on Philemon.

4 Obs. *Such as turn truly, must turn to God.* This is implied here in that the Lord complains, *Yet have yee not returned unto mee, saith the Lord.* Many turn from sin to sin, they turn from Drunkenness to Covetousness, from Idolatry to Libertinism, &c. This is a changing of one sin for another, but true conversion is a turning from all sin to God, it is a turning from sin which is the greatest evil, unto God who is the chiefest good, *Deut.* 4. 30. *Jer.* 3. 1. 22. *Lam.* 3. 40. *Hos.* 14. 1. *Joel* 2. 12.

5 Obs. *Hardned Sinners are incorrigible and incurable.* When men have got a custom of sinning and have long rejected the Word of God, then it is not all that Mount *Sinai*, or Mount *Sion* can afford, not all the dreadful Curses of the

one, nor all the gracious Promises of the other, that can work upon them; as we see in *Cain*, *Pharaoh*, *Saul*, and others; Let the Lord spend all his Arrows upon them, yet they return not unto him that smites them, *Isa.* 9. 13. but the more they are smitten, the worse they are, *Isa.* 1. 5. like the Smiths stithy, the more it is stricken the harder it is; let God smite them yet they refuse to receive correction. (*Jer.* 2. 30.) The Bellows are burnt (the Prophets Lungs are consumed) and the Founder melts in vain, for the wicked are not turned from their wickedness, therefore reprobate silver shall men call them (*Jer.* 6. 29, 30.) because their scum still abides in them, *Ezek.* 24. 6. 12. 13. How impregnable are the consciences of wicked men, who are no more moved with the threatnings of Gods Ministers than the people which live under the fall of *Nilus* are at the sound thereof; their continual familiarity with that noyse, either quite deafs them, or else makes them dis-regard it. They are as senseless of what is spoken as the Pillars which they leane to, or the Seats which they sit upon; so that many men come short of the very faith of Devils; for they beleeve there is a God, and that all which he hath spoken in his Word is true; they beleeve the Power, Justice, and Wrath of God so far as to tremble at it, and herein they goe beyond most wicked men, who never goe so farre as to quake and tremble at Gods threatnings, yea the Devil hath taught them a lesson which he cannot learn himself, *viz.* to mock at Gods threatnings, saying in their hearts they shall never come upon us. The Devil quakes and fears, whilst these are sensless and incorrigible. How many are corrected, but not amended; beaten, but not bettered; this doubles mens sins and makes them out of measure sinful, when neither the Word nor the Sword, neither Mercies nor Menaces, neither Promises nor Threatnings can work upon men; when sin is grown too strong for that means which God hath ordained to suppress it, they are nigh to utter destruction. This plainly appears by this people of *Israel*, after their defection and Apostacy from the Worship of God, they never Prospered but had one Judgement after another till they were quite destroyed. We are apt to wonder at *Israels* induration, and yet this is *Englands* Sin. God hath done as much to reclaim us as ever he did for *Israel*, and *yet we have not returned to him.*

See Mr *Professes* Fast Ser. on Isa. 9. 13. and Mr. *Youngs* Drunkards Charact. p. 243 and my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. p. 132. D. *Reynolds* on Psal. 110, 1. p. 336, 337. folio.

See this Point very well enlarged, by Mr. *Caler*, on Jam. 2. 19. p. 98. *Corripimur sed non corrigimur, plectimur sed non flectimur. Salvian.* See more in my Com. on Hos. 13. 13. p. 22

1 The Lord hath punisht our neighbour Nations to make us fear, we have seen what he hath done to *Germany, Ireland, Savoy*, &c. he expected that their desolation should have been our Instruction (*Zeph.* 3. 6, 7.) but yet we have not returned to the Lord.

2 He hath sent amongst us many *Elijahs* and *Elisha's*, to wooe us, and to warn us, and yet we have not returned to the Lord.

3 He hath drawn us with the cords of love, and given us Mercy upon Mercy, Deliverance upon Deliverance, Victory upon Victory, and yet yee have not returned to me saith the Lord.

4 VVe have had Sword, Plague, and Famine amongst us, and yet yee have not returned unto me saith the Lord.

5 And now the Lord seems to threaten greater Judgements, and to deal more severely with us for our obstinacy, and impenitency, and yet we are as stupid and stubborn as ever, and never once think of returning to him that smites us. O that the Lord would awaken every soul of us out of this deep and deadly sleep! oh that every one would now goe into his Closet, and there seriously ask his soul, *What have I done?* Against what light and love, against what wooings and warnings, against what Mercies and Judgements have I rebelled! None so beloved of his God as I, and none that hath so abused his love as I have done. Oh that we could now take shame to our selves for our stubborn standing out so long against so good and gracious a God! oh that we could judge our selves for our rebellion, and loathe our selves for our great provocations, then would the Lord repent of the evil he intended against us, and we might hope to see better days than yet we have seen.

6 Obs. *Hipocritical turning is no turning in Gods esteem.* This People did sometimes howl in their misery, and fast and pray (*Hos.* 7. 14.) but it was but counterfeit, and therefore the Lord chargeth them still with this, *Yet have yee not returned to me, saith the Lord.* False things in Scripture are counted as no things. A wicked man is accounted as no man, *Jer.* 5. 1. the streets of *Jerusalem* were full of men, but because they were not good men, God calls them no men. Thus the wicked

are said to have no heart, *i.e.* no good heart, and so as good have none at all, *Hos.* 7. 11.

Verse 7. 8.

And I also have with-holden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the Harvest; and I caused it to raine upon one City, and caused it not to raine upon another City; one peece was rained upon, and the peece whereupon it rained not, withered.

So two or three Cities wandred unto one City to drink water, but they were not satisfied, yet have yee not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

THe Prophet descends to the enumeration of new Judgements, two of which were the *Causes of the Famine.* The first was Drought, and want of Rain, *vers.* 7, 8. The second was Blasting, Mil-dew, and the Palmer-worm, *vers.* 9.

This People were like Clouds without water, and yeelded no obedience to God, but followed Idols; and now his clouds have no water for them. When God is against us all are against us; so that here we have a second Scourge, where-with the Lord chastised this people that he might bring them home to himself, *viz.* Drought and Barrenness; he had before punisht them with Famine, and want of Bread, now he punisheth them with Thirst, and want of Water. Thus the Lord tried all conclusions to better them, but in vain, as will appear by the sequel.

Manang, abibui, prohibui, cœrcui.

In this Verse we have 1. The efficient cause of this Judgement, *viz.* the Lord, *I have with-holden the rain from you, viz.* the latter rain, which that hot Country had most need of, I have forbidden it to fall upon you, saith God.

2 Here is the continuance of the Judgement, it was not for a week or two, but for three months, even till the fruits of the earth withered and were destroyed, and this the Lord did, the more deeply to affect them with their sins. One months want of rain, in that hot Country especially, should have startled them, two months should have astonisht them, but three

three months should have fully awakened them, yet such was their gross sensleſnesse and stupidity, that they laid it not to heart. And therefore the Lord the better to set forth his patience, and this peoples impenitency, sets forth his dealings particularly with them, and tells us how he brought the *Famine*, the *Drought*, the *Palmer-worm*, and the *Pestilence*, *&c.* upon them. He came not suddenly upon them, but gave them space to repent, and time to consider their wayes, and the tokens of his displeasure against them. But such was their obstinacy and malice, that nothing could work upon them, their Disease was too strong for the Physick, and their Maladies for Gods remedies, his labour was lost upon them.

3 Here is the juncture of time when this rain was with-held from them, *viz.* three months before Harvest, which was about *March*; for about the latter end of *May* in that hot Country was their Harvest; this was called *the latter rain*, and was very needful to fit, fill, and ripen the Corn for Harvest. For the better understanding of this, we must know that the Land of *Canaan* was not like the Land of *Ægypt*, for in *Ægypt* they seldome or never had any rain (*Zech.* 14. 18.) for the River *Nilus* did once a year over-flow the greatest part of their Country, and so did mellow and soften the earth for all the year after. But *Canaan* was a mountanous place, and could not be so watered, and therefore the Lord took more special care of it, and watered it with rain from Heaven, (*Deut.* 11. 10, 11.) In this Land there were two more especial seasons for rain, *viz.* the *former rain* about *September*, when the Seed was sown, that it might take the better rooting; and the *latter rain* in the Spring time, when the Corn was grown up and earing, to fit it for the Harvest; and this was called the *latter rain*, which is said to fall in the first month, that is, in *March*, which with them was the beginning of the year, *Joel* 2. 23. Hence are those frequent expressions in Scripture of *the former and the latter rain*, *Deut.* 11. 14. *Jer.* 5. 24. *Hos.* 6. 3. *Zech.* 10. 2. *Jam.* 5. 7. for in Harvest it seldome or never rained in those hot Countries, and therefore when *Samuel* by Prayer had obtained rain in Harvest, they looked upon it as a prodigious thing, 1 *Sam.* 12. 16, 17, 18, 19. now the want of either of these rains was sad, but specially the latter, when a man shall see his Corn sown, grown

up, and then when he expects a Harvest after all his pains for want of rain to have it wither and dye before his eyes, this must needs be grievous to him.

4 Here is the accuratenesse of Gods Judgements, he distinguisheth between City and City, Feild and Feild, *I caused it to rain upon one City, and not upon another.* As hee commanded the Sun to shine on *Goshen*, and not on *Egypt*, so he commands the rain to fall on some, and not on others. These things came not by chance, but by providence; it is I (saith the Lord) that commanded it to rain upon one parcel of ground, and not upon another.

Ne putaret in hoc lege naturæ fieri, & astrorum cursu, super unam civitatem pluit, super alteram non pluit. Ribera.

5 Here is the effect of this Judgement, it makes them run from City to City for water (*vers.* 8.) but in vain, for they could not get enough to satisfie their necessities. They were sensible of bodily wants, but insensible of Spiritual wants, and therefore

6 The Lord concludes with the usual Epostrophe, *Yet have yee not returned unto me, saith the Lord.* Though they were thus sadly afflicted, yet were they not bettered, but remained incurable under all corrections.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Want of seasonable rain is a punishment for sin.* When God is angry with a People, then hee with-holds the former and the latter rain from them. God hath rain enough in store, but it is our sins which keeps it from falling upon us; his hand is not shortned that it cannot save, but it is our iniquity that turns away good things from us; these shut the Heavens, and make them hard as Iron, so that they cannot heare the earth, when (in its kind) it gapes and cries for rain, *Deut.* 28. 23, 24. *Hag.* 1. 9, 10. it is obedience that brings rain. Those Cities that were rained upon in the text, some conceive to have been godly Cities which hated Idolatry, and worshipped the true God, though the text will not bear such a glosse, for God makes his Rain, which is but a common Blessing, to fall in the Wildernesse (*Job* 38. 26, 27.) and upon the unjust as well as upon the just; yet it is most certain that Piety hath the promise even of Temporal blessings, and such as are faithful with God in Spirituals, shall have

have Temporals given in to the bargain, *Levit.* 26. 3, 4. *Hos.* 2. 21, 22. *Hag.* 2. 18, 19. *Zech.* 8. 12. *Matth.* 6. 33. beware then of Disobedience, Apostasie, and abusing the Creature to intemperance, or the service of Idols, which provoke the Lord to strip us of our mercies, *Jerem.* 14. 4, 5, 6. wee finde the people mourning for want of rain, but *vers.* 7. 20. you may see the procuring cause of that Judgement, *for our backslidings are many, and we have sinned against thee, and have loved to wander after Idols*; and this was *Israels* Sin here, which more especially brought this Judgement on them.

2 Obs. *Rain falls by appointment, and not by accident; by providence, and not by chance.* It is not the Sun, the Moon, the Starres, or any other Natural cause, much less any Idols that can procure raine; but it is the Lords Prerogative Royal to give and order rain, *it is he that makes it rain on one City, and not on another.* The *Clouds* are Gods Servants, hee bids them goe rain here and not there, and they exactly obey his commands (*Job* 37. 11, 12, 13.) hence they are called *His Clouds*, (Job. 26. 8.) 1. In respect of *Efficiency*, he causeth the Sun to draw up moyst Vapours, and then turns them into Rain-water, preparing the Clouds to hold it. Hence God is called the Father of the rain, *Job* 38. 28. & 36. 27. & 37. 6. 2. They are his Clouds in respect of *Subservience*, they are no sooner produced but they are presently acting in their sphere, and region for their Lord and Master, one while raining on this Country, and anon on that; These are Gods Waterpots with which hee waters the World, the *Bottles of Heaven*, (*Job* 38. 37.) out of which God sends rain to refresh the earth and make it fruitful; he crowns the year with his goodness, when he makes his Clouds to drop down fatness on us, *Psal.* 65. 12. The earth is as it were Gods Garden, the Sea his Cistern, and the Clouds his Bottles to refresh the earth, and mollifie it, and make it fit for our service. This is a great mercy, let not the commonness of it take away the sense of it; but let us fear to offend him who gives us rain; God takes it ill when we slight his Providence in this particular, *Jerem.* 5. 24. neither say they, let us fear the Lord, who giveth the former and the latter rain, *q. d.* what a strange thing is this that the sweet showers of rain have not softned

your

your hard hearts, and made you fear to offend him; wee should fear him who hath not only Fire, but Seas of water to pour on such as displease him. Give not thou Gods glory to another, many ascribe rain, as the Philistims did their destruction, to *chance*; (1 *Sam.* 6. 9.) so say many, this wind hath brought us rain, or this Moon, or this Planet, or this Idol-god; the Prophet confutes all these in the text, *It is I that caused it to rain*, saith the Lord. Hence the rain is called *His gift*, Job 5. 10. Psal. 104. 13, 14. & 147. 8. Isa. 30. 23. which is given sometimes in *mercy*, Psal. 68. 9. *Acts* 14. 17. and sometimes *in judgement*, Ezra 10. 9. Job 37. 13. Prov. 28. 3. Ezek. 38. 22. no Men nor Creatures, no Idol-gods, no nor the Heavens themselves can give a shower of rain without a word of command from God (*Jer.* 14. 22.) and therefore the Lord commands us in the want of rain to ask it of him, *Zech.* 10. 1. so did *Elijah*, Jam. 5. 18. and hee promiseth to hear our Prayers in this particular, 1 *King.* 8. 35, 36. 2 *Chron.* 7. 13, 14.

See more in Mr. *Caryl* on Job 5. 10.

Away then with those vain *Prognosticators*, that take upon them to fore-tell rain, and snow, and the times and seasons which God hath concealed from the sons of men. Rain is a future contingent thing, and therefore no man can positively say it shall rain on such a day, but not on such a day; besides, the text tells us, that it may rain on one City, and yet not rain at the same time on another. The folly of such persons is sufficiently known to every observant eye, *Nulla dies sine errato*, let a man write fair weather when they write foul, and he may hit as true as they.

See Mr. *Perkins* his Resolution of the Country-man, proving it utterly unlawful to buy or use our yearly Prognosticators, Vol. 3. p. 653.

Especially take heed of *Judicial Astrology*, when men take upon them to Calculate mens Nativities, to fore-tell Warres, Plagues, Famines, and changes in States and Kingdomes, and all this by the Stars; this is a Satanical cheat, it is great folly and madness; if you will beleeve St. *Austin*, They bring people into miserable slavery, who take upon them to fore-tell by the Starres, the manners of men, together with the acts and events of things. This judiciary Astrology is the very Key that openeth the door to Witch-craft and Idolatry. Hence we find South-sayers, Astrologers, and Idolaters, many times

Vendunt imperitis hominibus miserabilem servitutem, ex notatione syderum velle nascentium mores, actus, eventa praedicere; magnus error, & magna dementia. Aug. de Doct. Christ. l. 2. c. 21.

times yoked together, as *Dan.* 2. 2. 11. *Amos* 5. 16. The Devil delights to have men study this Art.

1 Because it robs *God* of his glory, and ascribes the foretelling of things contingent to the Stars, which is proper only unto God, *Isa.* 41. 23.

2 It is injurious *to men*, and keeps them in perpetual fear and slavery, telling them, that if they be born under such or such a Planet, then they must be burnt, drowned, or hanged, &c. When people beleeve not Gods Word, then hee gives them up to these delusions, *Isa.* 66. 4. have nothing therefore to doe with those *Panders of the Devil, and Brokers for Hell*; buy not their Lying, Jugling, ambiguous Books, but burn them, *Acts* 19. 19. if such Books as derogate from great men must be burnt, how much more such as draw mens hearts from trusting in the living God? The Astrologer (saith the learned *Binchius*) sins against *God*, against *men*, and against *himself*: because this Art is full of Pestilent curiosity, of tormenting fear, and deadly slavery. The learned and laborious Knight hath long since condemned this Devillish Art; take it in his own words, *Astrologia eventu fallax, usu superstitiosa, à Barbaris nationibus importata, bonis temporibus Graecia ignota, etiam malis Roma pulsa. Ars, quod in arte turpissimum est, nullis texta principiis, nulla subjux demonstratione, nullo constans syllogismo.*

Mellific. Theolog. Loc. 5. p. 6.

Sir *Hen. Savil* in *Oratione coram Regina. Elizab.* 1592. *Inter subtiles fatuos hos numerassem, nisi rudibus essent rudiores. Luther*

Against this cursed Art, see Arch-Bishop *Abbots* Thesis tertia. Fulleri Miscelan. l. 1. c. 16. p. 99. *Spanheim.* Dub. 33. P. 2. p. 331. *Brochman.* Cas. consc. p. 88. folio. *Gataker* against *Lilly*, Lord *Virulams* Advancement of Learning, p. 147. *Weemse* Vol. 4. p. 21, &c. *Barclaies* Argenis, chap. 17. *Calvin* Opuscula, Tract. adversus Astrologiam, p. 801. *Vicars* against *Heyden. Waterhouse* Defence of Humane Learning, p. 30, &c.

VERSE 8.

So two or three Cities wandred unto one City to drink water, but they were not satisfied; yet have yee not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

RAin in the Land of *Canaan* where *Israel* dwelt, it being a very hot Eastern Country, was very necessary, not only

for the fruites of the earth, but also for the quenching of thirst both of Man and Beast, especially if it be true which some learned men affirm, *viz.* That there were but few Springs here, and no considerable rivers but only *Jordan*; this made them glad to keep Rain-water in Cisterns for all uses, being most afflicted with Thirst and Drought if it rained not.

This made them run from one City to another to seek water; for as hunger, so thirst breaks thorow all difficulties. Those Cities that had no water, did run to those Cities that had either Spring-Water, or Rain-water, *but they were not sufficed*, saith the text, so great was the Drought, and so many that wanted, that they could not get Water enough to relieve their necessities, no not in those places where they had heard that it had rained. This shewes the great straight that they were in, no digging nor delving for Water at home could help them, no new nor old Springs could supply them, but they were forced to leave their houses, and to goe from City to City to seek water, and yet they could not be satisfied; for the Wells, or Water which might supply one City, yet could not supply so many. This one would think should have awakened them, and brought them to Repentance, no doubt but it did afright them, and made them sad, but yet they were not bettered by their sadness, for they went on still in their sins and superstitions dangerously, and desperately, without any returning, and therefore the Lord upbraids them once more with a *yet have yee not returned unto me, saith the Lord.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Sin, and specially the sin of Idolatry brings a People into great straights.* The Earth here languisheth, the Corn witheretb, and men run up and down for water to quench their thirst, and yet cannot get it, and why is all this? why for the sin and Apostacy of this people, 1 *King.* 8. 35. & 17. 1.

2 Obs. *God hath variety of Judgements in store, wherewith to punish a rebellious people.* If want of Bread will not mend them, he will try what want of VVater will doe, and if neither of these will work, yet he hath the Pestilence and Sword

to

to follow. Great Judgements are like great men, they seldom goe alone, they have many attendants. Hence when the Lord had threatned many sore Judgements against his People, hee tells them that if they will not be reformed by these things, he will yet plague them seven times more, according to their sins, yea and seven to that, and seven to that (*Levit.* 26. 18. 21. 24. 28.) seven times, that is, many times, and more extreamly than formerly; if one Judgement will not work upon *Pharaoh*, he hath nine more that shall; and if lesser will not stir and mend him, he hath greater that shall end him, *Exod.* 11. & 12. God hath not only written Judgements, but also many unwritten ones to send upon a rebellious people, *Deut.* 28. 61.

V. Babington on Exod. 11. 1. p. 221. folio.

3 Obs. *True repentance is a very difficult thing.* It is not so easily wrought as many imagine. This people here had Line upon Line, Sermon upon Sermon, Prophet upon Prophet, and Plague upon Plague, and yet you see the charge lies against them still, that *they had not yet returned to the Lord.* The change of nature is no easie thing, it is an act of Omnipotency; now true repentance is no less than the changing of the nature, it is not only a change of the words, or of the works, but of the heart and inward man; it is the changing of a Lion into a Lamb, of a VVolf into a Sheep, of Fire into VVater, and of Darkness into Light, *Isa.* 11. 8. *Ephes.* 5. 8. None can change Nature, but the God of Nature, no rods or afflictions of themselves can doe it; they rather stupifie men, or else make them fret, and so drive them further from God, till he by his grace doe sanctifie them, and set them home upon our hearts, they will never better us; how many are corrected, but are never taught; but when the Lord * teacheth Mortification, Sanctification, Humiliation, and obedience by our sufferings, then happy are we, *Psal.* 94. 12.

Se Mr. *Cafe* his Morning Lecture, *quarto* p. 487.

* See an excellent little Tract of Mr. *Cafes*, on Psal. 94. 12. and Mr. *Harsnets* Cordial for the Afflicted, and *Trapps* Love Tokens.

Verse 9.

I have smitten you with Blasting and Mildew, when your Gardens, and your Vineyards, and your Fig-trees, and your Olive-trees increased; the Palmer-worm devoured them, yet have yee not returned unto mee, saith the Lord.

WE are now come to the third Scourge which God used for the amendment of this People, and that is *the smiting of their fruit* which grew in their Fields, Gardens, and Vine-yards. They had abused them to Luxury and Idolatry, and now they lose them. God had given them Corne to supply their *necessity*, and Vines, and Figgs, and Olives for *delight*; but their sins deprived them both of the one and the other. In the words we have,

1 The Person smiting, and that is the Lord, it is I, your Creator, Preserver, Deliverer, that hath blest you so long, that now doth blast you, *It is I that have smitten you.*

2 Here is the Rod with which hee smites them, consisting of three Lashes.

1. Blasting.
2. Mildew.
3. The Palmer-worm.

Hæc duo & opinor, morbi & vitia segetum sunt, nam proximè horti & plantæ majores ab eruca dicuntur esse consumpti. Sanctius.

Blasting and Mildew, that may have relation to the Corn, and be one cause of the Famine before mentioned, *Vers.* 6. (and the Palmer-worm may have relation to the fruit. God used variety of Judgements that they might the better see his hand in all, and not attribute things to Fate, or Fortune, to Stars, or second causes.

Blasting is a Curse threatned against a disobedient People; (*Deut.* 28. 22.) it usually comes from an * East-wind, which is a scorching drying Wind, withering the Corn, and making it look yellow, *Gen.* 41. 6.

* See my Commentar. on Hos. 13. 15.

Siddaion, est uredo, ariditas & percussio segetum, quando ventus orientalis ingrediens, ut non maturescant.

Mildew is the spoyling of the Corn by excessive moysture, making

making it look * pale; so that it never comes to maturity, for the natural greenness is gone before it bee ripe, and the colour is faded.

* *Jerakion, rubigo, significat pallorem, Jer. 30. 6.*

The *Palmer-worm* is a noysome, devouring Worm, it is one of Gods great Armies which he sends against a rebellious People, to destroy their Vine-yards and Fig-trees, that is, the fruites of their Vines, Fig-trees, and Olives, by a Metonimy of the subject. These are worse than Locusts, for that feeds only on the tops of the ears of Corn, as he flies; but the Palmer-worm sticks close to the Fruites and Flowers they light on, and will not off till they have consumed them. It makes clean work, leaving nothing behind it. These *Israelites* that neglected their Souls, yet used great care and pains about their Vines, Olives, Gardens, and Orchards, but all your cost and care saith the Lord shall be lost, and become a prey to the Palmer-worm.

ultimum & pessimum malorum est eruca. Hierom. Gazam, eruca, à Gazem, q. tonsor, rasor, rosor, excisor, quia detondet & carpit herbas quibus insedit, est vermiculus villosus & hirsutus, oleribus infensus & arboribus. Sanctius.

3 Here is the *time* when the Lord smote them, and that was in the very flower and prime, when Gardens, and Vineyards, &c. were increased, and loaden with fruit, when they were multiplying, then he blasted them; or the multitude of your Gardens and Vineyards did the Palmer-worm devour; so the Margin of our Bible.

Harbot, in multiplicando, i. e. augentibus hortis vestris, vel cum multum ferrent horti vestri.

4 Here are the *Persons* whose fruites were smitten, *viz.* the rebellious *Israelites*, included in the Pronoun Possessive, yours, yours, yours; your Gardens, your Vine-yards, your Fig-trees, your Olive-trees,; it is for your sins, and your sakes that these are smitten.

5 Here is the unsuccessfulness of these rods upon them, *yet have yee not returned unto me, saith the Lord.* One Judgement should have wrought upon them, or a second at least, but when a third and fourth shall come, and yet a people shall not be wrought upon, it argues the height of obstinacy and malice; and that such Persons are exceedingly blinded, and besotted by the Devil to their own destruction; it is a God-provoking Sin, thus still to sin against the remedy of their recovery; and therefore the Lord still layes his finger on this sore, and oft complaines of it, as here, so elsewhere *Isa. 9. 13.*

Jer. 3. 10. & 5. 3. & 8. 5. *Hos.* 7. 10. *Hag.* 2. 17. How ofte doth he require the amendment of this fault, making many promises to incourage them, *Jer.* 3. 1. 7. 14. 22. and threatens them if they will not, *Jer.* 15. 7. and yet still they continue impenitent.

See more before on verse 6. Obs. 5.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *God wants not Hosts and Armies of Creatures to subdue a stubborn and rebellious people.* He hath the Host of Heaven, and the Hosts of the Earth at his beck, and if he but hiss, or stamp, or give the least intimation to them, they are presently up in armes against us, *Isa.* 5. 26. & 7. 18. Frost and Snow, Hayl and Tempests, are all his servants, ready prest to doe his will (*Exod.* 9. 23. *Psal.* 147. 16, 17, 18. *Hag.* 2. 17) with these hee can destroy our Fruites in the bud, or in the blade, or when they are come to maturity, yea when they are in the Barn he can send Lightning and consume them. If hee be angry with us, he can call for an Army of Insects, and contemptible Animals, and by these he can destroy us. When *Pharaoh* rebelled against him, the Lord sent an Army of Froggs, Flies, and Lice against him, and by these hee vext him (*Exod.* 8. 2. 16. 21.) the Lord hath Hosts of Men and Angels at command, but hee chuseth rather to confound his enemies by these contemptible Creatures, that he may exalt his own power, and abase proud man; hee hath the Canker-worm, the Palmer-worm, the Locust, and the Caterpiller, these are called his *great army*, which he sends against a disobedient people, *Joel* 2. 11. 25.

Obj. *We are not troubled with an Army of Locusts, Palmer-worms, &c. these were proper to those Eastern Countries?*

Ans. It is true, *literally*, our cold Southern Climate is not subject to the annoyance of these; yet if the Lord bee angry with us, he can send even these upon us, for South and East are alike to him. *Mystically, and Metaphorically*, hee hath troubled us with an Army of Locusts, Caterpillars, Canker-worms, &c. yea in kind, he sent a strange Grub which devoured only the Barley (which is most abused by Drunkenness) in many parts of the Land, in the year one thousand six hundred forty nine, yea and he can and will (if *England* goe on to

to sin after the rate that it hath done of late years) bring in an Army of Forreigners, fierce and savage men, whose Language we understand not, who shall shew no mercy to the Old, nor pitty to the Young; what is said of the Natural, is most true of these Metaphorical Palmer-worms, *they are the last and the worst of evils*; they sweep all away before them, and make clean work where they goe, *Joel* 2. 3. and this is that Judgement which the Lord seems at this day to bee preparing for *England*, and yet we are not affected with it. The Churches enemies are strongly united, and have made a kind of Universal peace amongst themselves, *Gebal* and *Ammon*, and *Amaleck*, the *Moabites*, the *Ismalites*, the *Hagarens*, &c. *France*, *Spain*, *Italy*, *Curland*, *Holland*, *Denmark*, &c. are all confederate and united; and the Churches of Christ who should joyn to their Dove-like simplicity, Serpentine wisdome, when in this juncture of time they should be most strongly united, they are most sadly divided, both within and without, the King of *Denmark*, with the Electors of *Saxony* and *Brandenburg*, joyn with Papists against the Protestant interest, and so doth the *Hollander*. What sad Massacres have been in *Savoy* and *Poland* is well known to the world; and *Plots* are preparing for the destruction of the Protestants both in *France* and *Switzerland*; and *England* that was alwaies wont to preserve the Protestant interest, and assist it in all Nations, yet is so sadly divided, and crumbled into so many Factions, and Fractions, into so many Divisions, and Subdivisions, that without a Miracle of Mercy, we are like to bee made a prey to the Common adversary, who labours with all his might to divide us, that so he may destroy us. Let us then serve the Lord with one shoulder, and with one consent; let us not provoke this great God, who hath so many Armies in store ready to execute his Judgements on us, *Jer.* 15. 3. Hee is the best friend, and the saddest foe; if he be for us, all is for us, but if he be against us, all creatures are against us. We should therefore make peace with this great Lord-General of all Armies, and then they will all be at peace with us; when our wayes please the Lord, he will make even our enemies to be at peace with us, *Prov.* 16. 7. the men of *Tire* and *Sidon* desired to be at peace with *Herod*, because their Land was nourisht by the Kings Land, *Acts* 12. 20. all we have, we have

have it from God, we are Tenants at will to him, and therefore should be careful to preserve his favour. Many when Blasting and Mildews are abroad, goe not to God, but to a Bush for ayd; They will *May* their Corn, and stick up a Bush, thinking by this means to keep it from Blasting; a Heathenish custom, to be abhorred of all such as acknowledge the Providence of God. Such Atheistical practices may justly provoke the Lord to blast thy Corn indeed. Little better is that of the Popish Processions about the Fields, with Flaggs, and Banners, and Bables. The best and only remedy in this case, is humble penitential Prayer, 1 *King*.8.37,38,39. to such the Promise runs, *If Blasting, Mildew, Locust, or Caterpillars be in the Land, if Gods people shall pray, and know every man the plague of his own heart*, that is, his Sin, which is the cause of all other Plagues, *then will the Lord hear in heaven, and forgive, and heal the Land*, 2 Chron. 6.28. 29, 30. & 2. 7, 13, 14.

2 Obs. *Loss of fruit is a punishment for sin, and a sign of Gods displeasure against a people.* Fruit, Corn, Cattel, Trees, all fare the worse for sinful man. God turns a fruitful Land into a Wilderness for the wickedness of them that dwell therein, *Psal.* 107. 34. and therefore when the Lord is angry with a People, we read how he brake their trees with hayl, and destroyed their Vines and Fig-trees, *Exod.* 9. 25. & 10. 5. *Deut.* 28. 16, 17, 18. 39, 40. *Psal.* 78. 48. & 105. 33. we should therefore over-look second causes, and see Gods hand afflicting us in these losses. Many impute that to Winds, Frosts, Blasts, &c. which are indeed the finger of God, pointing to our abuse of the Creatures, which provokes him to take them from us. It will be our wisdome therefore when ever the Lord gives us plenty, to take notice of Gods hand, and praise him; and when we want them, to be humbled before him, and to beg the restoring of them at his hand, who gives to all that ask in faith, liberally, and upbraideth no man.

See more in M. *Austine* his Treatise of Fruit-trees, p. 16. 17. the best on that subject for Natural and Theolog. observations that I have seen.

Ver.

VERSE 10.

I have sent among you the Pestilence after the manner of Ægypt, your young men have I slaine with the sword, and have taken away your horses, and I have made the stink of your Camps to come up into your nostrils; yet have yee not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

IN this Verse we have a Fourth and Fifth Rod, where-with the Lord chastned this stubborn people, *viz.* the *Pestilence*, and the *Sword*. Before they were smitten with the *Famine*, which rich men many times feel not; now follows the *Plague* and *Sword*, as usual Concomitants on the former; hence all these three are so oft joyned together in Scripture. These meet with the rich, as well as the poor; yea the Sword aims principally at rich men; Souldiers doe not use to enquire, where dwells the poor man, but where dwells the Usurer, the rich Oppressor, &c. the poor scape best many times in such combustions, *Jer.* 39. 20.

Q. *The Question will be, what* Pestilence *this was, and when it fell upon* Israel?

A. 1. It is conceived that the Pestilence of *Ægypt* here meant, was not any one particular Plague, but a complication of Plagues; and specially the Fifth and Tenth Plague of *Ægypt*, which brought *Murrain on the Cattle, and Mortality on men.* First, there was so great and so grievous a destruction of Cattel, that all the Horses, Asses, Camels, and all the Cattel of *Ægypt* dyed (*Exod.* 9. 6, 9.) 2 All their first-born dyed, there was not a house in which there was not one dead, *Exod.* 12. 29. *Psal.* 78. 50, 51. so it was amongst this people, there was a sore slaughter both of men and horses. The Prophet seems to allude to the dayes of King *Jehoahaz* King of *Israel*; when the King of *Syria* made so great a slaughter amongst them, that of the whole Army of *Israel* there were left but fifty Horse-men, ten Chariots, and ten thousand Foot, all the rest were destroyed, and made like the dust by threshing (2 *King.* 13. 7.) Hereupon the Air was corrupted, and the loathsome stench of so many dead Bodies, helpt to bring the Pestilence amongst them.

See my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. p. 143.

In this Verse wee have these parts considerable.
1 The Judgements inflicted, which are two.

1. The Pestilence.
2. The Sword.

2 Here is the nature of this *Pestilence*, it is not an ordinary one, but it is a most noysome, grievous, deadly Pestilence; such a one as God inflicted upon his professed enemies, the *Ægyptians*, when Man and Beast suddenly dyed. *Jeroboam* when he was in *Ægypt* learnt the Worship of the golden Calves, this he taught to *Israel*, and having made them like the *Ægyptians* in Idolatry and Sin, the Lord now makes them alike in Judgement, *I have sent amongst you the Pestilence, after the manner of Ægypt.* The words in the fountain are, I have smitten you with Pestilence *in the way of Ægypt*, it is an Hebraism used in other places, as *Isa.* 10. 24, 26. *Ezek.* 20. 30. and is as much as *after the manner of Ægypt*, as our Translation renders it well, *q. d.* As I sent sore Plagues upon the *Ægyptians*, in like severity will I deal with you, who have walked in their obstinacy and Idolatry.

Deber, Pestis, see this word fully explained by Mr. *Greenhil* on Ezek. 5. 12. p. 455. & *Fulleri Miscel. l. 1. cap. 7. p. 50*

Bederech, in via, exponi potest per Kederech, i. e. instar via, vel secundum viam, i. e. secundum rationem, modum & morem Ægypti. A Lapide.

3 Here is the special Object, or the *Persons* slaine by the Sword, and these are their young and strong men, *Your young men have I slaine with the sword.* Young men are for Warre, and more fit for service than old men, by reason of their strength, spirit, boldness, and activity; Old men are for counsel, and young men for action. Young men in the height of their blood sin with more heat and violence, and so their sins are more displeasing unto God; and therefore he oft cuts them off in the height of their sin.

Bachurim, electos vestros i. e. juvenes, ita dicuntur à delectu, quod ad bellum & negotia deligi solent. Mercer.

4 Here are two Adjuncts and Concomitants which usually attend upon Warre; the first is the loss of Horses, *I have taken away your horses*, and carried them into captivity, with your haughty young men who trusted in them. These are the strength of the battail; but the Riders being taken, the Horses must needs be taken with them.

2 Loathsome stench, and noysome smells, I have made the stench of your Camps *to come up into your nostrils*, partly by such as dyed of the Plague, and partly by the multitude of men and horses that were slain, and lay unburied, and so infected the air.

Beesh, significat putredinem fœtorem.

5 Here

5 Here is the old complaint continued still, *yet have yee not returned unto me, saith the Lord.* Though yee have been thus sadly smitten with all my great Rods, yet all my labour is but lost upon you, for you still contemn the remedy of your recovery, and have not yet returned unto me saith the Lord.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *When lesser Rods will not mend a people, God usually comes with greater.* Blasting, Mildew, Palmer-worms did not work upon this People, and now comes Pestilence and Sword, Gods great Rods to destroy them utterly. See more in my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. p. 68.

2 Obs. *Judgements, especially great ones, seldome goe alone,* Sword, Plague, Famine, often goe together. As men multiply Sins, so God multiplies Plagues; and as they have variety of sins, so he hath variety of punishments, as I have shewed before on Vers. 8. Obs. 2.

3 Obs. *Parity of Sin, brings parity of Judgement.* The *Ægyptians* were obstinate Idolaters, no Plagues could work upon them, therefore God destroyed them. And this was *Israels* case, they were obstinate Idolaters like the *Ægyptians*, and now God follows them with Plague upon Plague as hee did them, *I have sent upon you Pestilence after the manner of Ægypt.* They were incurable and incorrigible like the *Ægyptians*, and now God smites them with *Ægyptian* Plagues, according to that threatning, *Deut.* 28. 61. *I will cause the diseases of Ægypt to cleave unto thee.* Sin hardens Gods heart against his people, and makes him deal with them, as hee useth to doe with his enemies. It turns him, who is our best friend, into the saddest foe. That power which he used in destroying his peoples enemies, if his people forsake him, and rebel against him, hee will exert that power in destroying them. Thus the Lord used here the same weapons of his wrath against his people, as before hee used in destroying the *Ægyptians.*

And may not *England* now fear, lest that power, which the Lord hath shewed in the saving of us from the hands of unreasonable men, should now bee turned against us for our Blasphemies, and Apostacies, and as we have partaken with *Germanies* sins, and *Polands* sins, and *Irelands* sins; so wee

should be made like them for plagues. Wee have given the Lord just cause by our provocations to turn his hand against us, and to consume us after he hath done us good. (*Jos.* 24. 20.) And as hee hath made us the head, so now hee might make us the tayl; and as he hath made us the terror of the Nations, so now he may justly make them a terror to us for our ungrateful, dis-ingenuous walking towards him.

4 Obs. *The Pestilence comes more immediately from God*; It is his Messenger, it is commanded and commissioned by God, to goe to such and such Families, Towns, and Persons, that so if any one ask, How came the Pestilence here, why *I sent it said God*; it is a servant of his sending, 2 *Sam.* 24. 15 and an Arrow of his shooting, *Psal.* 91. 5. with this hee wounds, kills, and consumes his enemies, *Ezek.* 5. 16, 17. The Plague is not *Casual*, but *Providential*, there is a Divine hand of immediate Providence in this Judgement; as there is no evil of affliction in the City, so much less this signal evil, but it comes from God, *Amos* 3. 6. It is he that decrees it, he increaseth it, and he removes it, how and when he pleaseth. Hence it is called his *Sword*, 1 Chron. 21. *ult.* it is not the sword of a weak man, but of an Almighty God, which none can resist or fly from; it is his *Hand* out of which none can deliver us, 2 *Sam.* 24. 14. *Moses* tells *Pharaoh*, that if he refuse to let *Israel* goe, behold *the hand of the Lord*, i. e. the Plague shall light on thy Cattel, *Exod.* 9. 3. this hand of his will finde out all his enemies, *Psal.* 21. 8. this is a sign of Gods great Wrath. God brings not out this great Rod, till men have greatly provoked him by their great sins, *Numb.* 11. 33. & 16. 46, 47. *Levit.* 26. 25. *Deut.* 32. 22, 23.

As 1. *Idolatry*. This is a God-provoking, and a Land-destroying Sin, and brings the Plague upon a Land, *Psal.* 106. 29. *Ezek.* 5. 11, 12. *Rev.* 16. 2, 11.

2 Contempt of Gods Word and wayes, *Deut.* 28. 21. *Jer.* 29. 18, 19.

3 Fornication and uncleanness. For this Sin God cut off twenty four thousand of the *Israelites* with the Pestilence, *Numb.* 25. 9. men will not judge and punish such, but God will, *Heb.* 13. 4.

4 *Murmuring and unbelief*; when men repine at Gods dispensations, and will teach him how to rule the World, this

this brings the Plague, *Numb.* 14. 2. 3. 11. 12. 36, 37. & 16. 46.

5 *Persecuting Gods Ministers and people. Pharaoh*, that persecured *Israel*, had variety of Plagues laid on him. God shoots this Arrow especially at such, *Psal.* 7. 13. *Jer.* 29. 18. & 38. 2. The Heathen Emperours which persecuted the Christians, were punisht with great Plagues.

6 *Prophanation of holy things.* This brought the Pestilence (as it is conceived) upon the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 11. 30. he will be sanctified of all that draw nigh unto him; in *mercy*, if they come preparedly: in *judgement*, if they come irreverently.

Wee should therefore be careful by unfeigned Repentance and Humiliation to remove Sin which is the cause, and then the Plague which is but the effect will soon cease; but without this, all Physick, flying, washings, burning, &c. are but vain. Till God bee appeased, the Plague will never bee appeased; till we humble our selves before him, he will not heal us, 2 *Chron.* 7. 13, 14. till by *faith* we fly unto him, he will not hide us from the Pestilence, *Psal.* 91. 1. to 8.

1 This speaks *Terror* to the wicked and impenitent; they have not to doe with men in this Judgement, but with God, who is a consuming fire; and from whom there is no flying, *Amos* 9. 1. to 5. when men oppose men, they may make some resistance; but when *Omnipotency* comes against *Impotency*, and the *Creator* against the *Creature*, whose heart can be strong, or whose hands endure? *Ezek.* 22. 14. The Plague, when it seizeth upon a man in wrath, it is a *Terrible* Judgement, and that in many respects.

1 In respect of *pain*, it torments men with terrible burning, in so much that many run mad, and make away themselves; yea and the stronger men are, usually the sooner they are cut off by the Pestilence. It is a noysome, loathsome Disease, hence called, *The noysome Pestilence*, Psal. 91. 3. and if any doe recover, yet are they seldome well; some lose their Hearing, some their Sight, some their Memory, most carry the prints of it with them to their Graves. It is a woful Judgement, and brings with it woful fears, woeful sorrows, woful desolation, and woful terrours, even the terrours of death.

2 It is a Judgement that seldome goes alone, but is attended with famine, poverty, depopulation, ruine, *Jer.* 22. 6. 9. & 28. 8. *Ezek.* 14. 21.

3 It deprives us of many choyse *Blessings*, which in other distresses men doe enjoy.

1 It deprives us of the *liberty of Gods House and Ordinances.* A sad affliction, much lamented by *David*, Psalm 42. & 84.

2 It deprives us of our *Callings*, so that we cannot serve God in them, which is one great end why a good man desires to live.

3 Of the comfort of *Friends*, which in other Diseases they enjoy. Two are better than one, and woe to him that is alone.

4 The suddenness of it addes much to its terror; it slayes thousands suddenly; we read of seventy thousand slaine in three dayes, 2 *Sam.* 24. 15. it is an Arrow that flies speedily, *Psal.* 91. 5. In *Senacheribs* host in one night there dyed of the Plague (as some conceive) one hundred fourscore and five thousand men, 2 *King.* 19. 35.

See B. *Halls* Balm of Gilead, p. 173.

2 It may *comfort* the Godly, that they have not to doe with unreasonable men, whose tender mercies are cruelties; but with a gracious God, who in the midst of his Judgements remembers mercy. It is the Cup which their Father gives them, it is his Hand, his Arrow, his Messenger; hee sends, he orders, he moderates, and mitigates it; He bids it goe, and it goes; stay, and it staies, 2 *Sam.* 24. 15, 16. It is a mercy when the Lord corrects us himself, and doth not sell us into the hand of Slaves who have no mercy. This made *David* chuse the Plague rather than the Sword, 2 *Sam.* 24. 14. God keeps his people safe in the very midst of the Pestilence, when thousands, and ten thousands fall round about them, *Psal.* 91. 7. many a wicked man flies, and the Plague overtakes him; many a good man stayes, and God preserves him.

Q. *The Question then will be, Whether it be unlawful to fly in time of Pestilence?*

A. 1. Some hold it utterly unlawful, because our dayes are numbred, and as wee cannot prolong our dayes, so wee cannot shorten them, *Job* 7. 1. & 14, 15. This reason will not

not hold, for it is no *trusting*, but a *tempting* of God, it is rashness and presumption to run into danger because our dayes are numbred. A man may not goe into the Fire, nor cast himself into the Water, or goe meet a Lion or a Bear, because God hath determined how long we shall live. Christ would not tempt God, by casting himself down from the Pinnacle, as the Devil would have had him, *Matth.* 4. 6, 7. As God hath ordained the end, so he hath ordained the means to bring us to that end; as God hath determined our dayes, so he hath determined that wee shall fly dangers, and hurtful things which may shorten our dayes. When *Saul* threw a Javelin at *David* he fled from him, 1. *Sam.* 19. 10. wee see men fly from Sword and Famine, and why not from the Pestilence when God gives us an opportunity?

Providentia Dei non tollit causas secundas, sed eas statuit, quia per eas decreta sua exequitur. Zanchy.

Legitima media non obstiunt divinæ providentiæ, sed ei subordinantur. D. Geo. Abbot. Thesis quinta.

Omni animali-um generi à natura tributum est, ut se, corpus, & vitam tueatur. Cicero.

Nature teacheth every Creature to preserve it self from danger, and if the Lord should reveal it to us, that we should be safe from the Plague, yet we must use the means. *Noah* knew he should not be drowned in the Flood, and yet hee builds an Ark; *Paul* knew that God would save him, and his Partners in the Ship, yet they must use the means, and row towards the shore, *Acts* 27. 34, 38, 39, 40.

2 Obj. *Charity commands us to visit the Sick, and to help our Neighbours in their distress.*

Ans. Charity begins at home, I may not to help my Neighbour kill my self, and my family, by rash and presumptuous running into infected places without a call. Hee that commands that I should not kill another, commands also that I should not kill my self. The Plagues of God are terrible, and not to be played withall. In the time of the Law we see how careful the Lord was of the safety of his people, *Levit.* 15. 45. he commanded that the Leper should bee separated from others, he sets down signs how they should know it, hee must wear a different garment, and must cry, *I am unclean, unclean*; now if in the Leprosie which was a less infectious disease, and not deadly, such care was to be used, how much more in the Pestilence.

2 We may visit them *by others*, and send our charity by such as are appointed to tend them; and though in body wee are absent from them, yet we may and must sympathize with them, and by writing, praying, directing, providing of food

and

and Physick for them, we may and must according to our places and abilities help them.

3 Obj. *We must shun unbelief, but this flying arguetb weakness of faith, as if we could not be safe unless we fly.*

Ans. A pious use of the means, which God hath ordained for our safety, doth not destroy but establish faith. I beleeve, that God will preserve my life, yet I eate and drink, and must use means notwithstanding, else I should not trust, but tempt God.

2 We must distinguish.

1 There is a *flight of Diffidence*, and contempt of Gods Judgements, as if we would fly from his hand and presence, that it should not over-take us, and this is Atheistical.

2 There is a *Prudential, providential, religious flight*, when God gives us a way to escape, and to provide for our selves and our families, and this must thankfully be embraced; for *David* had strong faith, and yet he was *affraid* of the Pestilence, 1 *Chron.* 21. *ult.*

Shun two rocks, 1. *Stultam temeritatem.* 2. *Nimium timorem. Si Pestis imminet, fugiat qui valet, ac praecipuè isti qui sunt pavidi. Luther.*

4 Obj. *Yet* David *did not fly from it.*

Ans. 1. He was a Magistrate, and so bound by his place to abide amongst his people. 2. It continued but a short time, but three days. 3. It was his fault more especially that procured it. 4. Hee could not fly out of his Kingdom, unless he would fly into his enemies hands.

2 We must therefore *distinguish of Persons.*

1 Some are set by God in place of Publick trust, as Magistrates, Ministers, Over-seers of the Poor, &c. These must not fly, but must keep their places, that they may suppress disorders, and by their Government, Counsel, and Prayers, they must lye in the breach, as *Moses* and *Aaron* did, *Numb.* 16. 46, 47. now when a man hath this Call, hee may keep his station with comfort and courage; for the Lord hath promised to keep us whilst we keep our wayes, as appears in that precious ninety first Psalm, the most comfortable of all the Psalmes in times of Pestilence; God can destroy the *Ægyptians* by it, and yet preserve his people. How many Midwives, Physitians, and tenders of infected persons, some of which have laine in the same bed with infected persons, yet being called by God to the service, have been preserved from infection. Or, if a good man should dye of the Pestilence, yet being

being found in Gods way, he is blessed, *Rev.* 14. 13. *Blessed are the dead which dye in the Lord*, whether they dye of the Plague, or by the Sword, or Famine, it matters not, so they dye in the fear and favour of God.

Caution. Not that a Magistrate or Minister is bound in person to goe visit infected Persons, for then he makes himself uncapable of Publick imployment, and the Ministers Auditors will be afraid to come hear him; so that in this case the Publick good must be preferred before a private, and a greater good before a less. That good man *Bullinger* going to visit one infected with the Plague, brought it home to his family, so that his Wife and two Daughters dyed of it. The Church of God, and our own Families, are to be preferred before any private person; Publick persons are set over a Society, and not over one or two. Hence when *David* would have gone out with his Souldiers to battle, the people answer, *Thou shalt not goe, for thou art worth ten thousand of us*, 2 Sam. 18. 3. But private persons who are free, and have no publick tye by duty or charity to stay, they are free, and may for a time absent themselves if they please.

Charitatem laudo, non factum, Zanchius in Phil. 2. 30. ubi plura.

5 Obj. *I am a godly man, and God hath promised that such shall not dye of the plague*, Psal. 91. 10.

Ans. God hath no where promised an absolute freedome to his people from the Pestilence, but only conditionally, *viz.* so farre as it shall be good for them; indeed he alwayes preserves his people from the evil of it, so that it shall never be a Plague, or a Curse, but a fatherly correction to them; and so the Promise is fulfilled. *There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall the Plague come nigh thy dwelling*, *viz.* as an evil or curse, *Psal.* 91. 10. The evil is alwayes taken away from the godly, and the sting pulled out, and God makes it up to them in some better kind. By it he takes them away from greater evils, and makes the Pestilence like *Elijahs* fiery Chariot, to conveigh them more speedily to heaven. In respect of outward afflictions, all things come alike to all. *Eccles.* 9. 2. the same Sythe cuts down good corn and weeds, but for a different end and purpose. We may not therefore censure them all as wicked men that are visited with the Plague, for God may try his dearest Servants in this kind. *David*, *Job*, *Hezekiah*, and the *Corinthians* are conceived to have been visited all in this

kind. *Bullinger* had it, *Beza* had it three times, *Junius* and his pious Wife dyed of it, and a thousand holy men and women dyed of it in *Cyprians* time. What is for our profit wee patiently bear, this is sent for good to good men, and as all other things, so this shall turn to their everlasting good, *Rom.* 8. 28.

[See more of the Plague in *Rivet* on Psal. 91. D. *Bound* on Psal. 20. *Attersol* on Numb. 14. 11. p. 597. folio. Dr. *Gouge* his Arrows, p. 1, &c. *Roborough* on 2 Chron. 7. 14. Mr. *Clerks* Mirrour, chap. 98. folio. *Et pra aliis Binchii Mollisicium Theologicum, Loc.* 12. *Part.* 2. *pag.* 142, *&c.*]

5 Obs. *It is God that sends Warre upon a disobedient people.* This is his last and worst Rod, which hee brings forth against obstinate sinners, *Levit.* 26. 25. *Deut.* 28. 25. *Judg.* 2. 13, 14. *&* 3. 8. *&* 4. 1, 2. *&* 6. 1. *&* 10. 6, 7. *&* 13. 1. *Esa.* 42. 24, 25. *Jer.* 15, 6, 7. *Ezek.* 14. 17. 21,

This may inform us that Warre is lawful.

1 It is that which God commanded, *Deut.* 20. 1 *Sam.* 23. 2.

2 It is commended in the Saints. *Abraham* fought against four Kings, and conquered them; *Moses* warred against the *Amalakites*, and prevailed against them; *Jashua* fought against the *Canaanites*, and subdued them; *Gideon* fought against the *Midianites*; *Jephthah* against the *Ammonites*; *Sampson* and *David* fought against the *Philistims*, and God prospered them all, and they returned the praise of these Victories unto God, who teacheth his peoples hands to warre, *Psal.* 144. 1. and directs them in the battle, *Josh.* 6. 2, 3, 4. hee is their Captain, *Josh.* 5. 14. he gives them success, *Psal.* 144. 10. *Heb.* 11. 33, 34. *Revel.* 17. 14. so that the *Anabaptists* who condemn Warre as sinful, doe charge God with Sin, and so are guilty of indirect blasphemy at least.

Obj. *Warre might be lawful in the Old Testament, but it is unlawful in the New Testament.*

Ans. This is *Gratis dictum*, it is said, but it is not proved, yea the contrary appears by Christ himself, who commends the Centurions faith (*Matth.* 8. 20.) without any bidding him leave his Military imployment, which doubtless he would have done had it been sinful; by this wee see, that warring and beleeving may well subsist together in the same man.

John

John Baptist teacheth the Souldiers how they should behave themselves in their stations, which he would not have done had the calling it self been unlawful, *Luke* 3. 13, 14. neither did *Peter* dissuade *Cornelius* from his Military kind of life, but Baptized him without any injunction of forsaking his Military station, which had it been unlawful, hee would have done, *Acts* 10. 1, 2, 4. Besides in the New Testament, the Magistrate *must not bear the sword in vain, but must be a terror to those that doe evil*; and this he could not be, if he did not raise Armies sometimes against the Sons of *Belial* that rise against him. Yea the Anabaptists themselves in *Germany*, when they had once got power into their hands, they defended themselves by Armes, and made foul spoyl where they came.

Obj. *God would not suffer* David *to build him an house, because he was a Warrior, and had shed much blood*, 1 Chron. 22. 8. *but* Solomon *a Prince of peace must doe it.*

Ans. The Temple was to be a Type of the Church the proper subject of peace, and therefore *Solomon* a Prince of peace must build it, who was also a Type of Christ the Prince of peace, and in this respect *David* could not be a Type of Christ, because he had shed much blood. Not that God doth here condemn *David* for fighting his Battles, for he had Gods command, assistance, and approbation for what he did; but because the Temple was to be a Type and Figure of the Church, whereof Christ is head, therefore *Solomon* a man of Peace must build it.

Obj. *We are commanded not to resist evil.*

Ans. Such places speak against private revenge, and not against the Magistrates Power, who is appointed by God to be a terrour and punisher of such as doe evil; as I have at large shewed elsewhere. In my Com. on Psal. 82. 1. p. 26

Obj. *In the Primitive times the Church suffered Persecution, without any defending of themselves by any other armes than prayers and tears.*

Ans. Those times and our times differ; for in those Primitive times the Magistrate that should have defended the Church, was an utter enemy to it, and they might not take the Sword out of his hand, but must patiently suffer. But wee live under a Christian Magistrate, who calls for our assistance against the enemies of the Church, which call,

(when rightly Circumstantiated) wee are bound to obey.

[See the lawfulness of Warre proved in thirteen particulars, by Dr. *Gouge* in his Arrows, p. 209. 2 P. and in M. *Ley* his Fast Ser. on *Jer.* 4. 21, 22. p. 11. &c. Preacht 1643. Sharpius Loc. Com. Loc. 43. Q. 10. p. 246. Tactica Sacra. cap. 6. §. 9. p. 163, 164. see fifteen Anabapristical Cavils refelled by *Peter Martyr* on 2 *Sam.* 2. 24. *mihi* p. 193. and Dr. *Gouge* his Arrows, p. 210.]

2 This must deeply *humble* us when even the Sword lies on us, since we have not only to doe with men, but with the great God in it; it is he that raiseth Warre against us, and layeth this *sore* Judgement on us, and is therefore called the *hurtful Sword*, Psal. 144. 10. the *powerful Sword*, Job 5. 20. the *oppressive Sword*, Jer. 46. 16. the *devouring Sword*, which destroyes from one end of a Land unto another, *Jer.* 12. 12. Warre is the saddest of Judgements, as having usually all other Judgements attending on it, with confusion, Robbing, Rapes, Plundring, Firing of Townes, devastation of Countries, Imprisonment of mens Persons, doleful Out-cryes, and confused Noyses, with Garments rolled in bloud, (*Isa.* 9. 5.) when there is measuring of Cloth by the long ell, *i. e.* the Pike, and no Lawes can be heard for Drums. This turns a Garden of *Eden* into a desolate Wilderness (*Joel* 2. 3.) as we see in *Germany*, *Savoy*, *Poland*, *&c.*

See seventeen Sins which bring Warre upon a Land, *Binchius* Melit. Theolog. Loc. 12. P. 2. p. 134.

Let us therefore beware of provoking the Lord by our sins, to bring this direful Judgement on us. Let us judge our selves, and so prevent this Judgement, *Judg.* 10. 10. and put our mouthes in the dust if there may be hope, *Lam.* 3. 26. let us by our Prayers and Tears first conquer God, and then we shall quickly conquer all, *Psal.* 81. 13, 14. It is he only that raised our Warres, that can make them cease; it is hee that gives the Sword its commission, and till hee take away its commission, it will not cease. It is he that maketh Warres to cease not only at home, but also abroad, even to the ends of the earth, *Psal.* 46. 9. It is not men that put an end to War, for if some might have their way we should never have peace; like *Salamanders* they love to live in the fire of warre and contention, these are Monsters, not Men; *Davids* Prayer shall be mine, *Scatter the people that delight in warre.* It is the Lord that subdues our enemies, and creates peace for his people.

Belli ingressum, progressum, & egressum à Deo. Binchius.

Hence

Hence *Moses* in that excellent Song ascribes all to God, (*Exod.* 15. 1. to 14.) *The Lord* hath triumphed gloriously, *He* (not we) hath thrown the Horse and his Rider into the Sea, *He* is our strength, *He* is our Salvation, *Thou* Lord hast overthrown them, *Thou* hast destroyed them, *Thou* hast delivered thy people, &c. when ever therefore we want Peace, let us goe to this God of peace, and by Prayer and patience wait on him, who can with a word of his mouth speak us into peace, and make all warres to cease amongst us.

[See more concerning Warre, in *Gerards* Loc. Com. de Magistratu, Tom. 2. folio, p. 416. in fine libri. Dr. *Gouge* his Arrows, p. 177. *Clerks* Mirror. chap. 134. B. *Halls* Cases of Consc. Decad. 2. cha. 9. Grotius de Jure belli. B. *Babington* on Exod. 17. 1. *Binchius* Mellif. Theolog. Loc. 12. p. 133, P. 2. see sixteen excellent Sermons in Latine on this subject, by *Sibelius*, on Exod. 17. 1. &c. 1. Vol. folio, p. 216, 217, &c.]

6 Obs. *Obstinate sinning provokes the Lord to cut off young men. Your young men have I slaine with the sword.* Their Sins are acted with more impetuous violence, and so are more displeasing unto God. As God is much delighted with the obedience of young men, when they can break through many difficulties to serve him (*Jer.* 2. 2.) so he is greatly displeased with the heady, haughty, outragious courses of young men, whom no counsel will reclaime, nor warning amend. That age which is most prone to sin, is nearest to Judgement; and when God shall awaken Conscience, and set the sins of thy youth in order before thee, then thy mirth will be turned into mourning, and thy joy into heavinesse, *Eccles.* 11. 9. When young men dishonour God, and preferre the Devil his profest enemy before him, giving the wine and flower of their dayes to the Devil, and the dreggs to God; hee will give such up to spiritual Judgements, and take no pleasure in them, *Isa.* 9. 17. *I will not joy in your young men*; implying, that when young men walk in Gods way, they are Gods joy and delight, but when they are proud, prophane, idle, unclean, &c. then comes the Feaver, the Plague, the Sword, and cuts them off; such rude rebellious persons shall not live out half their dayes. When *Israel* fell to Idolatry, then *a fire consumed their young men*, Psalm 78. 63. and when they

grow obstinate and incorrigible, as in the text, then the Sword destroyes them.

See more in my Com. on 2. Tim. 3. 15.

Oh that Young men then would be perswaded to *fly from the lusts of youth*, deny themselves betimes, and make the Lord the God of their youth, and then nee will bee the God of their old age, hee will never leave them, nor forsake them.

Adjuncta captivitate equorum. Heb.

7 Obs. *Sin robs us of our Creature-comforts.* Before they lost their Young men, and now they lose the Horses, and the Riders too; *your Horses are gone into captivity*: and are taken from you. A Horse in it self is a useful creature, it Fights for us, Draws for us, and Carries us up and down; but sin robs us of them, and makes them unsuccessful and vaine, *Psal.* 33. 17. These *Israelites* had trusted in their Horses, (*Hos.* 14. 3.) and now God makes them sensible of their folly, in trusting to creatures that cannot profit them, nor save them in a time of trouble. God had left them, and now Peace leaves them, Horses leave them, Plenty leaves them, and their Young men which were the strength of their Battle, leave them; so sad it is with people when God departs from them, *Hos.* 7. 13.

8 Obs. *Noysome stenches are a punishment for sin*, Isa. 34. 3. Joel 2. 20. As we have abused all our Senses, so God may justly punish us in them all.

Bless the Lord then for the Winds, those *Fans of the world*, which are a means to keep the Air pure from infection, which otherwise with Damps and ill sents would poyson us every moment.

Verse 11.

I have over-thrown (some) of you [or some amongst you] as God over-threw Sodom and Gomorrah, and yee were as a fire-brand pluckt out of the burning, yet have yee not returned to me, saith the Lord.

WE are now come to the Sixth and last Rod which God wasted on this stubborn People in vain, and that is the subversion of their Cities. *I have over-thrown some of*

of you, &c. Where we have, first, the Judgement executed, viz. *the subversion of some of their Cities*, Some read the words Prophetically, as if they were a Prophesie of some Judgement to come, *q. d.* I will raise up *Salmanaser* the King of *Assyria*, who shall besiege *Samaria*, and take it, and shall subdue the Kingdome of *Israel*. But this is clear against the text and context, for the word is in the Preterit Tense, and not in the Future; it is not I will, but I have overthrown your Cities; and yet yee have not returned unto me; which clearly shews that he speaks of Judgements past, and such as had been ineffectual upon them, and therefore he goes on to threaten more grievous things against them. But now, *thus will I doe unto thee, &c.*

Hapachti, subverti, vel everti vos, i. e. civitates vestras. Met. subj. Possessores pro re possessa.

2 Here is the *Author* of this subversion, viz. *the Lord*, I have overthrown some of you as God overthrew *Sodom*, q. d. As I overthrew *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, so have I overthrown your Cities. God speaks of himself according to the Hebrew Dialect in the third Person, setting forth thereby his Honour, and his power in this signal Judgement. The like expression we have, *Gen.* 19. 24. *The Lord rained fire and brimstone upon Sodom from the Lord*; that is, from himself. It is an Hebraism, when a Noun is put for a Pronoun, the more emphatically to express that it was not by Accident, or any ordinary course of Nature, but by the immediate and almighty Power of God, that such showers of Fire came upon them.

3 Here is the dreadfulness of this subversion, it was like the destruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*. As God made them examples of terrour to all the wicked in succeeding Generations, by consuming them with fire from Heaven (2 *Pet.* 2. 6. *Jude* 7.) so the Lord brought these *Israelites* to the very brink of utter ruine and destruction.

Q. *Wee read of no Cities in all the Scriptures, that ever the Lord destroyed with fire and brimstone immediately from Heaven, but only* Sodom *and* Gomorrah, *upon whom he brought the saddest and most stupendious destruction that ever we read of; how then are these Cities said to be destroyed like them?*

Ans. It is an Hyperbolical speech, frequently used in Scripture, to set forth the most terrible desolation, and dreadfullest devastation that can befall a People, and therefore

fore when the Holy Ghost would set forth the signal Wrath of God against a place, he tells us it was like the destruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*. Thus it sets forth the destruction of *Babylon*, Isa. 13. 19. & Jer. 50. 40. and so of *Moab* and *Ammon*, Zeph. 2. 9. so that it is a Figurative speech, and must not be taken Literally, but Allusively; *Sodoms* destruction is put for dreadful and extream desolation, and doth denote rather the measure of Gods displeasure, than the manner of the punishment, so *Isa.* 1. 9. *Jer.* 49. 18. *Hos.* 11. 8. *Israel* here was brought so low, and to such extreamity by their enemies, that their destruction seemed like that of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and those that escaped out of those great trials were so few, that they seemed like a brand pulled out of the fire. This seems to relate to that time when God raised up *Hazael*, and the *Syrians*, who smote *Israel* in all their Coasts, burnt their Cities, laid wast *Gilead* and *Bashan*, killed their young men, slew their Children, ript up their VVomen with Child, oppreſt them in their Estates and Persons, so that they became like the dust by threshing, that is, very weak and contemptible; their strong Holds were lost, and they had no Humane helper; they had but fifty Horse-men left, and ten Chariots, and ten thousand Foot, a poor Guard for a Kingdome. To so low an ebbe were they brought, as appears 2 *King.* 10. 32, 33. & 2 *King.* 13. 3. 7, 20, 22. & 14. 26.

Synecdoc. speciei.

4 Here is Gods mercy to *Israel*, set forth by a kind of correction or mitigation; yee were indeed like *Sodome*, yet not altogether like *Sodome*, for all their Cities were burnt and none escaped; but the Lord hath spared your Metropolis, and chief City *Samaria*, *and pulled some of you as a brand out of the fire*, q. d. when you were in a very low and lost condition, being like a peece of Timber half burnt, yet then had I pitty on you, and remembred my Covenant, and rescued you out of your present misery by the hand of *Jeroboam* the second, the Son of *Joash*, even as a brand out of the flame, and saved a remnant of you from the sword (2 *King.* 14. 25.) To pull one as a brand out of the fire is a Proverbial speech, and signifies the great danger which a man is in. Thus *Joshua* the High Priest, whom the Lord delivered out of the *Babylonian* fiery Furnace, is called, *A brand pluckt out of the fire*, Zach. 3. 2.

Torris ab incendio. Proverb.

5 Here

5 Here is their horrid obstinacy still under this hideous and stupendious Judgement, *Yet have yee not returned unto me, saith the Lord.* This is *Versus intercalaris*, the usual burden of Gods sad complaint, though he had sent amongst them *Ægyptian* Plagues, and *Sodomitical* destructions, yet so obdurate were they, that neither the one nor the other could work upon them.

Versus intercalaris dicitur, qui frequenter post aliquantulos interponitur versus.

The sum of all is this, *That I might leave no means unassayed (saith the Lord) to reclaim you, I have added this to all the rest of my Judgements, that I have overthrown some of your Cities, and brought you so low, that you were almost like* Sodome *and* Gomorrah, *and you of* Samaria *were left out of the common destruction, as a brand taken out of the fire, yet all this hath not moved you to return unto me, saith the Lord.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *If the Word of God work not upon mens hearts, neither will Judgements work upon them.* These people had *Elijah*, *Elisha*, *Jonah*, *Joel*, *Micah*, *Hosea*, *Amos*, to preach to them, but their Ministery was ineffectual, and now wee see that no Judgement can work upon them. Those that are *Sermon-proof*, and will not beleeve the Word of God, will quickly be *Judgement-proof*, and contemn Gods Sword. Those that have *Moses* and the *Prophets*, and yet will not beleeve them, neither will they beleeve though one should arise from the dead, *Luke* 16. *ult.* If a man should come roaring from Hell, it would affright men, but it is easier to fright men out of their wits, than out of their sins. *Lazarus* rose from the dead, yet the Pharisees were so farre from being bettered thereby, that they grew madder against Christ. So at the Resurrection of Christ, many arose, and appeared to many, and no doubt but they told them, how it was with those that were dead, and yet it could not work upon them. He that cavils at the Word, will also cavil at Miracles, as the Pharisees did at the Miracles of Christ. He that will not beleeve the Spirit of God speaking in the Prophets, will not beleeve a man pretending that he came from the Dead, and telling what the Damned suffer there. How should he beleeve a Creature, that will not beleeve the infallible testimony of his Creator?

Qui adeò induratus est, ut Scripturæ non credat, nec mortuis resurgentibus credet. *Stella.*

The Scriptures are a surer ground for us to build upon, than an Angels voyce (2 *Pet.* 1. 19.) No revelations are to be compared to them, God will never set in with wayes of

mens invention, when they despise the waies of his own Ordination. The blind world which is weary of true Doctrine, is apt to think, that if an Angel from Heaven, or a Ghost from Hell would come and teach them, then they should bee converted. These are like *Saul*, who contemned the counsel of *Samuel* living, yet desired to speak with him when he was dead. But, 1. why doe you not beleeve Christ who dyed, and is risen from the dead, and speaks daily to you by his Ministers? 2. Why doe you not beleeve the Prophets, who being dead yet speak to you, and have left us a more sure word of Prophesie? 3. Suppose one should come from Hell all in flames, and tell you what the Damned suffer there, yet how is it probable that this should doe you good, when God tells you the same thing in his Word, and yet you will not beleeve him? It is most certain, that those who despise Gods Ordinance, will never beleeve a report from a doubtful and erring authority. Desire not therefore Miracles, or Revelations and Enthusiasms, this is a tempting of God; but suffer God to teach thee in his own way, by his Word and Sacraments; so did * *Luther*, and this is the desire of all the Saints, that God would guide them with his counsel here, that is, with his VVord and Spirit, and so bring them to glory, *Psal.* 73. 24. The conversion of a Sinner is not so much from the excellency of the means, or the abilities of the Speaker, as from the power of Gods Grace, which teacheth us to profit, and maketh the means effectual to us. Great then is the folly of those, who take upon them to teach God, how he should teach the VVorld; they would have Miracles and Angels to doe it, when God saies they shall have Ministers, and Preaching by men to doe it. It is a Satanical delusion for men to think of being converted, or comforted by any other way, than that which God himself hath prescribed. If God hath planted thee under a godly and a faithful Ministry, and that cannot convert thee, then assure thy self if an Angel from Heaven, or a Ghost from Hell should come and preach every Sabbath to thee thou wouldst

* *Si in manu mea res esset, non vellem Deum mihi loqui de cælo, aut apparere mihi; hoc autem vellem & quotidie precor, ut in honore digno habeam verbum & Sacramenta. Luther.*

Non est necesse ut infernum descendam, & videam quomodo illic sæviat Divina justitia; sufficit mihi ut eam in hoc mundo contemplor. Granatensis.

not be converted. Sad is the condition then of many amongst us, who vilifie and contemn, who mock and scorne at the Preaching of the Word, accounting the publishers of it the Pests of a place, and the troublers of *Israel* (1 *King.* 18. 17.) grudging at their maintenance, and slaying their persons, this is a sign of remediless ruine to a Nation, 2 *Chron.* 36. 15, 16. *Levit.* 26. 14, 15, 16. *Jer.* 25. 4, 7, 8, 9. *Prov.* 13. 13.

2 Obs. *There is a Divine hand of Providence, that governs the world.* This brings plenty and poverty, rain on one City, and not on another; one City is fired, and another is rescued, as a brand out of the fire. These things come not by chance, or fortune, but there is a signal providence of God in them all. Hee feeds the Sparrows, cloathes the Lillies, numbers our Hairs, and takes special care of his people. Hee hath a directing, protecting, compassionate, vindicating care over all his, he tenders them as the apple of his eye, and writes them upon the palmes of his hands, they are ever in his sight, *Isa.* 49. 15. & 63. 9. *Ezek.* 16. 8. *Zach.* 2. 8. *Mal.* 3. 17. *Acts* 9. 4.

See M. *Jenkins* his Ser. on Deut. 32. 11

This Providence of God is
1 Watchful.
2 Distinct.
3 Strong.
4 VVise in working.

See all these Heads inlarged in Mr. *Robinsons* Ser. on Psal. 73. 24. p. 25. preacht at a Funeral, 1654.

We should therefore comfort our selves in this special Providence of God, and cast all our burdens of cares & fears on him. Hee that provides for the meanest creatures, will not suffer his noblest Creatures to want. He that provides for Sparrows, (said good Mr. *Herne* when he was dying, to his sad wife) will not suffer Herns to want. Yea he that provides so liberally for his enemies, what will he not doe for his friends? Away then with all carking, distrustful care, only commit thy way unto the Lord, and hee shall direct thy paths. Bee *patient* under all wrongs and injuries, remembring that Gods eye takes special notice of all the wrongs that are done to his people, to avenge them, *Exod.* 3. 9. 2 *Chron.* 16. 8, 9. Let our moderation be made known to all, since the Lord is at hand, *Phil.* 4. 5.

V. Godolphin his Holy Limbeck, p. 207

[See more of the Providence of God in Mr. *Perkins* on the Creed, Artic. 1. p. 154. folio. Vol. 1. *Peter Martyr* on

1 Sam. 10. p. 56, 57. Leissus de Attributis, p. 625. Dr *Gouge* his Arrows, p. 373. *Rutherford* Lect. Latine, c. 14. p. 122. *Corbet* Fast Ser. on 1 Cor. 1. 27. p. 5, &c. *Dyke* on Matth. 4. 4. p. 160, &c. *Strong* 31 select Ser. p. 657. *Rawrth Jacobs* Ladder, p. 5, &c. B. *Andrews* Catechis. chap. 7. folio. mihi p. 29. *Herberts* Poems, p. 109, &c. *Pemble*, folio. p. 263. to 279. Minutius felix per totum. *Par* his Grounds of Divinity, p. 33, &c.]

3 Obs. *God is the destroyer of sinful Cities.* If you would know, who it is that overthrows your Cities, It is I saith the Lord, that in justice for your provocations have made your Cities a desolation; I fired *Sodom*, destroyed *No*, *Niniveh*, *Samaria*, *Babylon*, *Jerusalem*. As the Lord raiseth Cities, and defends the good (2 *King*. 19. 34. & 20. 6.) so he ruines and layes waste the bad, *Hos*. 13. 16. *Luke* 19. 44. keep sin then out of your Cities, if you desire to keep them from fire, plunder, ruine. Take heed of offending God, who is a consuming Fire, and can in a trice consume us, and turn our dwellings into ashes.

See my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. p. 70, 71.

4 Obs. *In the midst of Judgements God remembers mercy.* Hee doth not stirre up all his wrath, nor suffer his whole displeasure to arise, but lets fall only some drops upon us, when he might pour a whole Sea of wrath upon our heads, *Psalm* 78. 38. God might justly have destroyed all these *Israelites* for their Idolatry and Apostasie, yet he remembred his Covenant, though they had fouly forgot it, and transgrest it (*Hos*. 6. 7.) and saves a *remnant*, he destroyed but some, not all their Cities. So oft elsewhere we read of a remnant that were saved, 2 *King*. 19. 31. & *Isa*. 1. 9. & 10. 22. *Rom*. 9. 27.

5 Obs. *Neither Judgements nor Mercies can work upon hardned Sinners.* Some of these *Israelites* were destroyed like *Sodom*, and others in mercy were pulled like a Brand out of the fire; yet nothing works upon them; but they are *Israel* still, as Idolatrous and obstinate as ever. When the heart is once hardned by a long custom of sinning, it is not all that Mount *Ebal*, or Mount *Gerizim*, Mount *Sinai*, or Mount *Sion* can afford; not all the dreadful Curses of the one, nor all the gracious Promises of the other, that can work upon mens hearts, *Prov*. 23. 29, 34, 35. *Ezek*. 20. 5, 6, 7, 8, 18, 21.

neither

neither *Johns* austerity, nor Christs lenity could work upon hard-hearted *Jews*. If God by his Spirit set not in with the means, nothing works kindly upon us; yea wee shall bee the worse for beating, as these *Israelites*, all these six Rods doe but stupifie them, and make them fitter for a greater Judgement. One rod being sanctified may bring a man home to God, as the Prison did *Manasses*, want the Prodigal, and the Earth-quake the Jaylor; they had Gods Spirit, that taught them to profit by afflictions, and so were blessed, *Psal.* 94. 12. but a thousand stripes on a *Pharaoh*, *Saul*, &c. doe but make them the more senseless and inborate; and is not this *Englands* Sin? may not we behold our own faces in this Glass? may not the Lord justly complaine of us, as he doth here of *Israel*? I have smitten *England* with Sword, Plague, and Famine; some of their Towns and Cities I have fired, and the rest were as a brand pulled out of the fire. Many a time have I broken and blasted the Power and Policy of many great *Achitophels*, and delivered them from many eminent imminent dangers; and yet such is their incorrigibleness, and incurableness, that they have not returned unto me, saith the Lord. If any thing destroy this Nation, it is our obstinacy and impenitency, under all those various Dispensations of Mercies, and means which we have so long enjoyed. God like a good Physician, hath long studied our Disease, and given us many Purgative draughts to drink; he hath visited us with variety of Judgements, and hath let us bloud several times, the better to obtain our Cure, and yet he may complaine of us as hee doth of *Israel* here, that we have not for all this returned to him.

VERSE 12.

Therefore thus will I doe unto thee, O Israel, and because I will doe thus unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.

WEE have heard before of *Israels* Sin, and *Israels* Punishment for their sin. We are now come to the third and last part of this third Sermon of the Prophet, which contains an Exhortation, or Invitation to Repentance; where we have,

1 The Illative Particle, or the note of Inference, *Therefore*; The Lord draws a conclusion against them from the former Premises, *q. d.* since none of my former Judgements will reclaime you, I am now resolved, that you shall reap the fruit of your disobedience, you shall no longer be my People, but I will cast you out of Covenant, and send you into an impure Land; so that yee shall not only lose your Land, but your Religion too; not only your Soyl but your Souls to boot; not only your goods but your God. I have sent out my Footmen (saith God) and you have contemned them and contended with them; I will now see what you will doe with Horse-men (*Jer.* 12. 5.) I my self will now arise in armes against you, as against a pack of rebels.

2 Here is the Lords Commination of some greater Judgement implied and couched in general terms, *Thus will I do unto thee.* The Lord seeing their incorrigibleness, goes on to denounce a sorer and sadder Judgement against them, than any yet had befallen them. He doeth not tell them how, or in what kind he will punish them, but leaves them to imagine the worst, thereby intimating that he would bring upon them sadder evils than they could imagine. *Thus* terribly, *thus* severely, in a more furious manner than formerly, wil I deal with thee. The Judgement was so dreadful, that the Prophet seems either loath, or at least unable to express it; and therefore he doth as it were draw a Vail over what hee could not in words set forth, with a *Thus will I doe unto thee*; q. d. I will bring upon thee some direful desolation, and utter destruction, for so it follows, *Amos* 8. 14. *They shall fall and never rise again.* Since they be impenitent, I will speedily execute upon them what I formerly threatned (*ver.* 2, 3.) I will give *Samaria* your Metropolis into the *Assyrians* hand, and you shall be carried Captive into a strange Land. There seems to be in the words a kind of Pathetical Aposiopesis; when a man for anger and indignation cannot speak out his words, but cuts off some word, or part of a sentence which is to bee understood; and such kind of speech is very

Quid sit facturus, tacet, ut dum ad singula pœnarum genera pendent incerti, pœnitentiam agant, ne inferat, quæ minatur. Hieron.

Hac figura perturbatis atque offensis animis accommodata est, Sanctius.

See more in my Schools-Guard, p. 153. *Egone illam? quæ illum? quæ me? quæ non? Terent.*

very frequent both in sacred and prophane Writers. Thus, *Psal.* 95. 11. *To whom I sware in my wrath, if they enter into my rest, q. d.* they shall never enter into my rest; if they come there, let me not be God, or let me not be true. Thus the Hebrews in their execration Oathes were wont to speak. *Thus* and thus let God doe to me (1 *Sam.* 25. 22.) without expressing the imprecation, as fearing to name those dreadful evils.

Quos ego (scil. acerimè puniam) sed (nunc) motos præstat componere fluctus. Virg. Æneid. l. 1

3. Hee allaies this sharp Commination with a gentle and sweet *exhortation*, full of clemency and consolation, telling them that he is yet their God in Covenant, ready to receive them, if they will but truly repent, and come in unto him; and therefore he counsels them speedily to prepare (for where no time is exprest, there, as the Debt, say Lawyers, so the Duty, say Divines, is presently to bee performed) to meet him, *Isa.* 21. 12. return and come, but when? why presently, that is implied. So here, *prepare to meet thy God*; but when? why presently, before the decree bring forth, and it be too late, *Zeph.* 21. 2. The Lord having told them what he would doe to them, now (such is his goodness) that hee shewes them what they should doe, to prevent his Judgements, *viz.* prepare to meet him. Since he was ready to cast them off, he adviseth them to cast themselves down, and to implore his mercy, and make peace with him.

Vide ut te tui tædeat, & resipiscendo ad Deum tuum, cum nondum planè te abdicat, revertaris, ut antevertas faciem iratum ejus.

Q. *But what is meant by preparing to meet God?*

Ans. To meet one hath various meanings in Scripture; 1. Sometimes we goe to meet Persons, that we may honour them, thus *Abraham* and *Lot* went to meet the Angels, *Gen.* 18. 2. & 19. 1. 2. Sometimes we goe to meet Persons, that we may scoff and jear at them, as *Michal* the Daughter of *Saul* did *David*, 2 Sam. 6. 20. 3. Sometimes we goe to meet Persons to fight with them, as *David* did with *Goliah*, 1 Sam. 17. 48. And thus some take the words in the Text for an Ironical taunting speech, as if the Lord had said, Since I am coming against thee, prepare your selves to meet me, and see if yee bee able to encounter me, and keep me back, who am coming against you as an enemy; come on, and meet mee with your hardned hearts, muster up your Armies, recollect your Forces, call in to your ayde all your Creature-confiden-

Te pares ad sustinendum impetum iræ meæ; aut ut occurras mihi vera resipiscentia & emendatione. Drusius.

ces-

ces, and see if they can deliver you from my hand, and save you from my wrath, which is even ready to seize upon you. But this sense is very harsh, and contrary to the scope of the place; for all along the Lord calls upon them, not to stand out against him, but to submit unto him, and therefore he so oft complaines, even five times; *Yet have yee not returned unto me, saith the Lord.* Besides, there is no meeting of God with Armes and Armies, or any warlike Forces; what can all the hosts in the world doe against the Lord of Hosts, or who ever hardned himself against him and prospered? *Job* 9. 4. let the Potsheards strive with the Potsheards of the earth, but woe be to him that striveth with his Maker.

4 Sometimes we goe out to meet Persons to humble our selves before them, and to submit to them, as *Shimei* did to *David*, 2 Sam. 19. 16. and thus it is in the text, *Prepare to meet thy God*, viz. by Prayers and tears, by humble supplication, and real humiliation for sin, by forsaking your Idols, and cleaving to Gods true Worship, and by amendment of your lives run to meet him, that you may prevent the execution of his wrath upon you, &c. This is the most proper meeting of God which is here called for, this is the genuine and true scope of the place; for the words are not a challenge, Come out and meet me; but a precious *direction*, shewing us what we must doe to appease and pacifie God, *viz.* not meet him in a way of *Opposition* and rebellion, for this were to set Bryers and Thorns in battle against a consuming fire (*Isa.* 27. 4.) but meet him in a way of *submission*, as *Abigail* met *David*, when he was coming to destroy *Nabal* and his house, 1 *Sam.* 25. 32. So here, since the Lord hath taken up this determination to punish thee, O *Israel*, and is resolved to bring some greater Judgement on thee, therefore prepare thy self (saith the Prophet) by unfeigned humiliation and repentance, that so thou maist prevent the execution of the sentence. Put on thy mourning weeds, take up a lamentation, make ready thy Petition, goe forth upon thy knee, and beseech him to spare thee, that so thou maist prevent thy utter destruction which is now at hand.

Preparare in voces Deum tuum. Septuag. Syriac. Arabic. Vers.

Currat pœnitentia, ne præcurrat sententia. Chrysologus.

Q. *But why doth the Lord call upon his people to prepare themselves, when their hearts were hardned, and he tells us that the way of man is not in himself, and that the preparation of the*

the heart is his work, and not ours. (Psal. 10. 17.) *Besides, he had decreed here to carry them into captivity, and hee tells them as much, and therefore all their repentance was but vain.*

Ans. 1. The Lord had some elect and hidden ones both called, and to be called amongst them, and to these he principally speaks; for all Gods commands are effectual in beleevers: they are not an empty sound, as they are in the ears of unbeleevers, but there goes forth a power from God inableing them to obey; if he command them to beleeve, hee inables them so to doe. If he command them to prepare to meet him by repentance, there goes forth a power from him which inables them so to doe. As when our Saviour commanded *Lazarus* to arise, there went forth a power from him that raised him. *Moti movemur, acti agimus*, when the will is regenerate and made pliable, then it readily obeyes all Gods commands, be they never so hard or harsh to flesh and bloud; yet they can doe all things Evangelically through Christ that strengthens them. God gives them his preventing, assisting, co-operating, persevering grace, *Joh* 11. 43, 44.

2. Such commands as these shew us our duty, not our ability, and must make us in the sense of our own inability, prepare our selves to sue unto him for preparation.

3. Such commands make the wicked more inexcusable, who had power in *Adam* to obey all Gods commands, but they in him have lost it, and by their daily obstinacy, and falling away from God, and his wayes, they have justified that grand Apostasie of our first Parents.

4. The threatnings of God are not alwayes absolute and irrevocable, but for the most part they are conditional, and so to be understood with this exception, *viz.* except they repent and amend; and this condition is sometimes expressed, as *Jer.* 18. 7, 8. *Joel* 2. 13, 14. and sometimes suppressed and concealed, as *Jonah* 3. 9. *Yet forty dayes and Ninineh shall bee destroyed*; that is, if they repented not. So here, though *Israels* case seemed desperate, yet the Lord bids them turn, and he would be propitious to them. See more in Mr. *Caryl* on Job 23. 13. p. 436.

5. Admit the judgement be irrevocable, and Gods people must notwithstanding their repentance, bee Captives to the

Assyrians, yet their repentance had not been fruitless, for they should have escaped eternal misery.

2 In this Life, the punishment of such Penitents is oft mitigated, though not totally removed. Hence we usually see, that in times of publick Calamity it goeth best with the best men; to them these are but fatherly Chastisements, when to the wicked they are fore-runners of greater wrath. A *Jeremy*, *Ezekiel*, *Daniel* may goe into Captivity, but it is for good, as the Lord said sometimes of his People, I will send them into the Land of *Caldea* for good, *Jer.* 24. 5. such mourners shall be marked for Mercy when Judgement comes. *Ezek.* 9. 4.

4 Here are the *Persons*, to whom this Exhortation is applied and directed, and that is, to the ten Tribes, who are often called by the name of *Israel*, as being his off-spring, 1 *King.* 14. 18. & 2 *King.* 3. 9. & 10. 32. hee names them twice, and ingeminates the title, the better to awaken them, and quicken their attention, as also to shew his great affection to them, as *David* named *Absalom* twice, whom he loved. So our Saviour speaking to *Jerusalem*, doubles the title, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem*, Mat. 23. 37. to awaken them, to shew his tender love and compassion to them, and to shew his anger against their sins, he Pathetically cries out, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the Prophets, &c.* q. d. *Thou that hast been the place which God hath honoured with his special presence, and chosen above all the place of the earth for his habitation, to fix his name there, art thou become a den of Devils and Murderers?* So the Lord here, the better to rouze these *Israelites* out of their security and impenitency, by an Epanodos, doubles their name, saying, *Thus will I doe to thee, O Israel, and because I will doe thus unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.*

5 Since we are backward and averse to this duty of Returning, he backs his Exhortation with a double Motive.

1 The first is a *drawing Motive*, taken from the consideration of Gods readiness to pardon Penitents. Hee *is thy God*, prepare to meet thy God; hee is thine by Profession, though thou hast walkt unanswerably to it. And 2. He is *Thy God* in Covenant with thee, and so ready to receive thee, if thou wilt but truly turn to him.

The

The second is a *driving Motive*, and is drawn from the consideration of Gods Almighty Power (*vers.* 13.) who was now marching against them. This power (the better to awaken them) he sets forth by six Royalties.

1 He formeth the Mountains.
2 Creates the Winds.
3 Knows mens Thoughts.
4 Maketh the Morning-darknes.
5 Treads upon the high places of the Earth.
6 He is the Lord of Hosts.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *When lesser Judgements will not mend a People, God usually comes with greater.* When Blasting, Mildew, Famine, Pestilence and Sword can doe no good, then look for, 3 *Thus will I doe unto thee*; that is, I will utterly destroy thee, for remedies are in vain, when the sore is so desperate. So *Isa.* 1. 5. *Why should yee be smitten any more?* q. d. your case is desperate and incurable, and therefore I will trouble my self no more with you, but will now utterly destroy you. And this is that, which highly aggravates *Englands* Sin, we have been long incorrigible under * lesser Judgements, and therefore what can we now expect, but that the Lord should come with a *Thus will I doe unto thee, O* England, *and because I will doe thus unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O* England.

* See more in my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. Obs. 4. p. 68.

2 Obs. *God will not stick to punish his owne people, and that severely, when they sin against him.* Where he bestowes the greatest Priviledges, there he inflicts the greatest Judgements. He is sharper with them than with Heathens, because they are neater to him, and so their sins doe more dishonour him. The sins of a *David* doe more dishonour God, than the sins of many uncircumcised Philistims. God will be sanctified of all his nigh ones, (*Levit.* 10. 2.) He dwells amongst his people, and cannot endure their provocations. We can endure dung in our fields, but not in our houses; we can bear with briars and thorns in the Wildernes, which we cannot endure in our inclosed Gardens. Such sin against great light, and great love, and therefore will bee surely and sharply punished for their iniquity (*Amos* 3. 2.) as wee see in *Eli*, *David*,

See more in my Com. on Hos. 13. 15. Obs. 3. 4. p. 48. to 53.

vid, Hezekiah, Zacharias, Jerusalem, Esa. 22. 1. Dan. 9. 12.

3 Obs. *Ministers must apply the Word unto their people.* Thus will I doe to thee O *Israel*. This is the only way to convince and convert men; what is spoken in general to all, few will apply to themselves. It is this Soul-searching Preaching that is the best teaching. But of this elsewhere.

In my Com. on Ho. 13. 16. Obs. 2. p. 467.

4 Obs. *God usually warnes before he smites.* In mercy here he warnes his people of approaching Judgements, and bids them prepare to meet him. He Lightens before he Thunders, and shoots off his Warning-peeces, before he shoots off his Murdering-peeces. He might have come suddenly upon them, and swept them away like dung from the face of the earth for their obstinacy; but see his transcendent clemency and pitty, he warnes them before he destroyes them, and counsels them before he condemns them.

Calamitas dicitur ventura ut agente populo pœnitentiam non veniat. Hieron.

See more in my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. p. 65

5 Obs. *God usually mingles Mercies with his Judgements, and Consolations with his Comminations.* Hee tells *Israel* here of Judgements, but withall he tells them of mercy upon repentance; with the one he drawes us as with cords of love, and with the other he drives us home to himself. The best have need of both, we have all need to hear of *Judgements*, to keep us from presumption; and of *Mercy*, when humbled, to keep us from despair. Hence God so oft joyns both together, as *Levit.* 26. *Deut.* 28. and the Prophets doe usually allay the terrours of the Law, with the comforts of the Gospel, *Joel* 2. 14.

6 Obs. *God owns his people, even when they are guilty of great sins.* He is God, and not like Man, that casts off men for every light offence. Hee tells them here, I am *thy God* still by profession, though thou hast not walkt up to that priviledge. I am thine by Covenant, and thou art mine *Israel* still, therefore prepare to meet me, and stand no longer out against me.

See more in my Com. on Hos. 13. 13. Obs. 6. p. 23.

7 Obs. *When the Lord is coming against a people in Judgement, he then expects that they should presently prepare to meet him by humble supplication, and real repentance.*

1 We must meet God *with a Petition in our hands*; thus Subjects usually address themselves to their Soveraign, especially

ally when they come under the notion of Offenders, or Malefactors to beg a pardon. We should dispatch these our Ambassadours, *our Prayers and teares*, to meet him in the way, (*Luke* 14. 32.) while he is yet afarre off, that we may prevent the Wrath that is coming upon us. Thus did *Moses*, when he perceived that Gods Wrath was kindled against *Israel*, he sought by humble and fervent Prayer to stop it, *Exod.* 32. 11, 12, 13. so when the Plague was new broke forth, hee commands *Aaron* presently to mediate and intercede for them, and so stayed the Plague, *Numb.* 16. 46, 47, 48. Yea God takes it ill, when in publick calamities there is no intercessor to meet him thus, and mediate for a Nation, *Esay* 59. 16. *Ezek.* 22. 30. These Ambassadours in all ages have prevailed wonderfully with God. A Prayer rightly qualified, and circumstanciated for man, matter, manner, what cannot it doe with God?

Mittamus preces & lacrymas cordis legates. Cyprian.

See my Com. on Psal. 82. ult. p. 182.

1 It hath an *Universal* power in removing Judgements, or procuring Mercies. The most signal providential changes that ever were made in the world, have been made by the Prayers of Gods people. Prayer is as it were the Midwife to bring great Blessings into the world, and remove great Judgements from us; and therefore when the Lord would destroy a people, he commands his *Jeremies* to forbear praying for them, they must not meet him in this kind to mediate or intercede for them, (*Jer.* 7. 16. & 14. 11.) thereby implying, that he cannot deny the Prayers of his people.

2 These Ambassadours have an *awakening power*. God seems to sleep and take no notice of the miseries of his people many times, but then by their Prayers they must awaken him, *Job* 8. 5, 6. There are two things which doe more especially awaken God, 1. The *Rage of wicked men* (Psal. 12. 5, & 78. 65, 66.) and 2. The Prayers of Gods people, *Psa.* 82. *ult.* & 141. 1. *Isa.* 51. 9.

3 They have a *binding and a loosening power*. *Moses* by his Prayers binds Gods hands that hee cannot strike, till he aske leave as it were of *Moses*, and bid him let goe that hee may smite them, *Exod.* 32. 10. *Numb.* 14. 17, 18, 19, 20. And Prayer hath a loosening power, sin ties

Considera hic quid precibus sanctorum tribuatur, quomodo illis Deus teneatur & ligetur. Quis te ligavit Domine? ligatum habent sancti Deum, ut non puniat nisi permiserint ipsi. Bern.

Gods hands, that they cannot help, but Prayer unties them. *Judg.* 10. 10. to 17.

4 They have a *commanding power*, such is Gods great condescention, that though he be the Commander of all, yet hee suffers himself to be commanded by the Prayers of his people, *Isa.* 45. 11. Gods people have often experienced the power of Prayer, and therefore in all their distresses they fly to their Prayers, and have ventured their lives, resolving rather to loose them, than their praying opportunities, *Dan.* 6. 10. yea and this hath made them so earnestly beg the Prayers of Gods people, *Romans* 15. 30. they will not part with their interest in them for a Kingdome. Yea, such is the power of the Prayers of the godly, that even wicked men, when they are in distress, have begged for them. Thus *Pharaoh* beseeches *Moses* to pray for him, and *Saul* calls for the Prayers of a *Samuel*. The time would fayl me, to tell of the great exploits, which the Prayer of faith hath done; no Conqueror can shew such famous Trophies and Triumphs as it can doe. Prayer actuated, and inlivened by faith, hath subdued Kingdoms, stopped the mouthes of Lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the Sword, &c. *Heb.* 11. 32, 33, 34, 35, 36. and hath done the Churches enemies more mischief, than all the Armies in the world (*Psal.* 56. 9.) how * lightly soever wicked men esteeme of them. This is *Gods Ordinance*, and hee ever loves to be found in his own way.

2. The Prayers of Gods people suit best with Gods interest and ends; they seek the advancement of Gods glory, the good of his Church, the increase of his graces in their souls; all which are very taking with God.

3. Their Prayers must needs be powerful, if you consider the *Persons praying*; they are Gods Sons and Daughters, his peculiar people, the Spouse of Christ. Now Relations can doe much; and if we, who are evil, will give good things to our Children, when they cry to us, much more will God supply the wants of his, when they call upon him, *Matth.* 7. 11. 4. They are put up

* *Nihil relictum est Britanicum domare Cæsarem, Ni νεομαστρομένας preces Gregis.* V. *May* his History of the Parliament of England, l. 3. c. 5. p. 90, 91. folio.

See the prevalency of Prayer, in Mr. *Neh. Rogers* his friend at midnight, Mr. *Love* on Luke 11. 8. and Mr. *Fenner* on Luke 11. 9. p. 163. folio. Mr. *Will. Sedgwick* his Fast Ser. on Isa. 62. 7. p. 28. & 43. preacht 1642. D. *Harris* his Fast Ser. on Luk. 10. 6. p. 43, & c. p. 3. preacht 1642.

up in Christs name, and indited by his Spirit, and God cannot deny Christ that makes intercession for us, and his Spirit, that makes intercession in us, with sighs and groans.

2 We must meet the Lord *humbly* and *submissively*. As *Benhadads* servants met the King of *Israel*, with ropes about their necks, because that they had heard, that the Kings of *Israel* were merciful Kings. So let us put ropes about our necks, as signs of our acknowledgement, that we are worthy of death; and the rather, because the God of Heaven is a merciful God, (1 *King*. 20. 31.) Rising and raging at Gods Chastisements like a wilde Bull in a net, when men are full of the fury of the Lord (*Esay* 51. 20.) this is the way to provoke God, to goe on in wrath against us, and to double his strokes upon us, *Levit*. 26. 24. If a Potent Prince should raise a great Army against us, and we had no strength to oppose his strength, the only way is to meet him with humble, submissive Supplications, and so make peace with him. So, when ever we find, that the great God is angry with us for our sins, let us lay down the weapons of our rebellion, submit unto him; judge our selves, and then he will not judge us; accuse our selves, and he will acquit us; be sharp, and severe with our selves, and he will be merciful to us; let us accept of the punishment of our iniquity, and justifie him, in all that he hath done unto us, and then we have his promise for pardon, *Levit*. 26. 40, 41, 42. wee know, it is not for Gods honour to trample upon worms. The Lion will not seize on a yeelding Prey, the Mastiff will not fall on the little Dogge, that lyes on its back, turns up all four, and cries quarter. The bending Reed is preserved, when the stubborn Oke is pluckt up by the roots. It is the proud and haughty, whom God resists; he sets himself in Battle array against them, and delights to manifest his power in their subversion, *Esay* 2. 12. to 18. But the humble are his habitation and delight. Let us therefore meet him submissively, considering wee are not a match for him. Sinful Nations are too weak for God, how much more are single Persons, *Esay* 40. 15. 1 *Cor*. 10. 22. It is God, that overturns Kings and Kingdoms at his pleasure, hee hath overthrown Kingdoms that stood like firme Rocks. Of all things here below, we count Metals the strongest, as Gold, Silver, Brass, Iron, of which *Nebuchadnezzars* Image was composed,

sed, (*Dan.* 2. 32, 33.) whereby is meant the *Babylonian*, *Persian*, *Grecian*, and *Roman* Monarchies, the four greatest Monarchs of the World, yet three of these the Lord hath already dasht in peeces, and the Iron one of *Rome* only remains, which God will shortly lay in the dust.

3 We must meet God *with grace in our hearts*. If wee goe to meet God, our business is to make our peace with God, which we cannot doe without grace, for to the wicked there is no peace. Now grace though it hath many other, yet it is chiefly woven up, and composed of these two golden threads, 1. *Love to God.* 2 *Hatred of sin.*

1 *Love to God.* We must love him *appreciative & intensive*, with highest intention of affection. Love is our best affection, and therefore most fit for God who is our best friend.

V. Mr. *Case* his Morning Lect. in *quarto* p. 54, 55.

2 *Hatred of Sin.* There are two Affections especially which set themselves against sin, which are, Hatred and Grief. Hatred respects the nature of sin; and Grief respects the nearness of sin. If we had no sin we should hate it, but if it were not near us, we should not grieve for it. There are many, that hate sin but never grieve for it, but we must meet God with both these affections in us; wee must hate sin as to its owne nature, and grieve for it as it is our owne sin, and as we offend God thereby; and this is to meet God with grace in our hearts.

4 We must meet God *with Christ in our armes*. There is no seeing his face, unless we bring this our elder brother with us. God is holy, and we are unholy, so that he will not treat with us without Christ, nor can wee think of God out of Christ, but with extream horrour; besides, God will have satisfaction for sin past, before he treat for the time to come; now Christ is our Atonement, and our Mediator, and wee can expect no good from God without him, therefore let us meet him with Christ in our armes.

5 We must meet God with true *Repentance*. Sorrow besits a Sinner, as a garment doth the body. The garment of Repentance was made for sinners. Had we never sinned, we had never sorrowed. Repentance is Gods delight, it is his favourite, which he comes down from Heaven to kisse and embrace. *Esay* 57. 15. *Luke* 15. 20. Sin armes God against us, but repentance disarmes him; he cannot withheld Mercies from

from the penitent, his promise hath given repentance power to prevail with him, it is the way of his owne prescribing, when he would have his people to find mercy in his eyes, hee bids them take this course, *Isa.* 1. 16, 17. & 55. 7. *Cant.* 6. 13. *Jer.* 4. 14. & 13. *ult.* *Ezek.* 18. 31, 32. *Joel* 2. 12, 13. *Zeph.* 2. 1, 2, 3. *Acts* 17. 30. *Jam.* 4. 8, 9, 10. This is a never failing remedy, it alwaies obtaines either the blessing sought for, or some better thing; as we see in *Manasses*, the *Ninivites*, *Mary Magdalen*, the *Prodigal*, *Paul*, the *Israelites*, Judg. 10. 15, 16.

Yea, the very shadow of repentance can doe something for the removal of a temporal Judgement; as we see in *Ahabs* hypocritical humiliation, and *Rehoboams*, 2 Chron. 12. 6, 7. The *Israelites* that cried unto the Lord only in their trouble, yet were delivered out of their distress; and if the shadow can doe so much, what will not the substance doe? Repentance qualifies the soul, and fits it for Mercies Temporal, and Spiritual. It makes the heart soft, tender, flexible, and ready to receive any impression from God, *Acts* 9. 6. This is that *Panacea*, that *Catholicon*, that Universal remedy against all maladies, 2 *Chron.* 7. 14. *Jer.* 18. 7, 8. These tears and waters of repentance are very medicinal, and can prevail with God, when no others can, to extinguish the fire of his wrath, which is now gone forth against us. *England* is now upon her *Sick-bed*, and we have great cause to fear, that shee is upon her *Death-bed*, and will scarcely recover; wee shall shortly see whether she will live or dye, her critical hour is now at hand, and we may justly suspect her death; and that because God hath cast his dealings with us into so many moulds and forms, and tried us every way, and yet we do not prepare to meet him. God hath been pleading with *England*, this hundred years by his *Word*, for his Worship, for his Day, for his Discipline, and for the power of godlinesse, and yet we have not prepared to meet him.

God hath of late years been pleading with *Fire and Sword*, and though these bloudy Arguments have spread abroad, and there is scarcely a Town where bloud hath not been shed; yet have we not prepared to meet the Lord. The Rod hath a voyce, but we have not heard it, *Micah* 6. 9. It is a sad Symptom of destruction, when we shall see the Rod, but not

hear it; it is a sign that we are either deaf, or dead. God hath spoken to us with anger in his countenance, and thunder in his voyce, will yee still prophane my Holy things? persist in your formality? and goe on in your rebellion against me? and yet we turn the deaf eare to him, having to be reformed. And now when we thought all Gods Judgements were buried, and the memory of them was almost obliterated, yet they seeme to revive, and to be raised out of their Graves again. We are now dying and know it not, gray hairs are here and there upon us, and we take no notice of it (*Hos.* 7. 9.) God cries to us by his Judgements, *To day if yee will hear his voyce, harden not your hearts*; while it is called to day make your peace with mee, before the night of warre, dearth, and death surprize you. God hath set forth a *Third Edition* of Warre, he hath printed his Wrath in Capital letters, his Spurs stick deep in our sides, and our lashes are heard over all parts of Christendome; and yet how little are we affected therewith, and how careless are we to prepare to meet the Lord. With what a horrid stupidity are wee benummed? the Plague of *Lots* Wife hath fallen upon us, and we are turned into Stones and Pillars; so that as our Saviour wept over *Jerusalem*, so should we weep over *England* for its induration, and not knowing the day of her Visitation. There is a dark and dismal cloud of wrath hangs over our heads; there is but one way left to prevent its falling on us, and that is, 1. *Personal Repentance*, every one to amend one. 2. *Domestical Repentance*, every Family apart must humble themselves for their family sins, *Zach.* 12. 12. 3. *National Repentance*, when the Magistrate shall command the whole Nation to humble themselves, for the crying sins, and great provocations, which have been daily committed in the midst of us. Till this be done, I shall never expect that truth or peace should abide long amongst us. Let us then every one fall heartily to this work, which must of necessity be done, or else we are undone, *Luke* 13. 3. *Joh.* 3. 5. let us humble our selves, and then God will raise us up, *Job* 22. 29. *Jam.* 4. 10. Let us weep now, and we shall have joy when troubles come, *Job* 5. 22. *Hab.* 3. 16. Our sins are the *Achans* which have troubled our *Israel*; our sins are the *Jonahs* which have raised these storms and tempests amongst us; our sins are the

the *Sheba's* that have raised rebellion in the Land, it is our malignant sins, which have raised up against us malignant enemies; let us then stone these *Achans*, and our troubles will cease; drown these *Jonahs*, and our storms will over; cut off the heads of these *Sheba's*, and our troubles will end; let us destroy our malignant sins, and God will soon destroy our malignant enemies. If men would but judge themselves, they should not be judged of God, 1 *Cor.* 11. 31. Let us then set upon this Soul-inriching-work of *Self-examination, and Self-judging*. Let us arraign our selves, and set our selves as in Gods presence, before his bar. Let us examine, and take a view of our selves, in the Glass of Gods Law, and when wee have found out our corruptions, let us with shame and sorrow confess them, and spread them before the Lord, to move him to shew pitty to us. Let us judge our selves worthy to be destroyed for them, humbly imploring pardon, in the name and mediation of Jesus Christ. Doe but this soundly, and sincerely, and it will qualifie thee, for mercies Temporal, Spiritual, and Eternal; and give thee title and interest in many gracious Promises; as *Levit.* 26. 40, 41, 42. *Prov.* 28. 13. 1 *Joh.* 1. 9. The Lord is now upon his march against us, it is time therefore for us to meet him with our Prayers, and mollifie him with our Tears, considering our own inability to grapple with him; Can dust and ashes contend with the God of Heaven and Earth? Can we with ten thousand Lusts, meet the Lord with twenty thousand of Angels? Can impotency vie with Omnipotency? O no.

See this Point excellently inlarged, by Mr. *Ant. Burgess*, in his Treatise of Self-judging

2 Consider, we cannot run from God (*Psal.* 139. 7. *Amos* 9. 2, 3.) we can goe no where from God, but we must fall into his hands. Let us therefore run from him, to him, *Ab irato ad placitum*, from him as an angry God, to him as a reconciled Father. Bloud-letting is the cure of bleeding; and so close with an enemy is the way to avoyd the blow.

3 Consider, *If we goe not to meet God, he will fetch us.* He will either fill our souls with terrours, or else send outward afflictions to arrest us. When *Joab* would not come to *Absolon*, he commands his field of Corn to bee fired, and then *Joab* arose and came, 2 *Sam.* 14. 30, 31. Physicians sometimes to cure the Lethargy, doe cast into a Feaver; so doth God, oft cure us of one evil by another. If the Word cannot, the

the Sword shall fetch us in, or else doe that which is worse; send us to Hell. Let us then learn to prevent blows; hearken to counsel and you may be safe, else rods are prepared for the backs of fools, *Prov.* 26. 3. If we come not in of our selves, let us expect some sad Messenger to fetch us; therefore while the sea is calm, and the weather fair, let us set out to meet our God. What the Lord said of *Hezekiah*, is too true of *England*, that he rendred not according to what he had received; so we are much behind hand with God, we receive much, but we return little; the Christian World is turned Bankrupt, and God is now issuing forth Process to seize upon Body, Goods, and Life. Hee cannot have what he would have, he will therefore have what he should have. He is now setting us as low, as we have hitherto set his love. Long-suffering is now at an end; God will have all paid now, or else Justice will set abroach our bloud. O *England*, then repent, and prepare to meet thy God; and to incourage us, know, that if wee will goe to meet God, he will come to meet us; he will meet our sorrow with his sense of it; our Prayers with his presence, and propitious answers; and our tears with his handkerchief. Nay, he will meet us with embraces, as the father of the Prodigal did his returning Son, *Luke* 15. 20. Let us then goe to him, with humble acknowledgements in our mouthes, and say to him, Father, we have sinned against Heaven, and before thee, we have abused thy Mercies, despised thy Judgements, despited thy Spirit, and have not returned unto thee. Let us thus in humility fall down at Gods feet, and he will fall on our necks, and embrace us in the armes of his love. Seeing therefore God will doe thus unto us, let us prepare our selves to meet our God.

[[illegible]ncerning the necessity, and excellency of Repentance, in [illegible]ster *Perkins*, Mr. *Dyke*, and Doct. *Tho. Taylor*, their particular Treatises of Repentance, Mr. *Hookers* Souls-preparation for Christ, Mr. *Bridge* on Matth. 4. 2. D. *Prestons Judas* Repentance, and *Pauls* conversion, Mr. *Fenners* Danger of deferring Repent. Many Treatises of Mr. *Baxter* about Conversion, Mr. *Swinnocks* Key to Regeneration, on *John* 3. 3. *Binchius* his Mellific. Theolog. Loc. 19. P. 4. p. 90. & Doct. *Holdsworth* on Hos. 14. 2. *Dyke* on Conscience, p. 49. and on the Sacrament, p. 37. *Taffin* on

on Amendment, p. 422. Mr. *Baines* Ser. Rev. 2.4. p. 17. Doct. *Loves* Ser. on Isa. 21. 12. Doct. *Burges* his Fast Serm. on Jer. 4. 14. *Hersent* on Repentance, Mr. *Case* his Morning Lectures in *quarto*, p. 485. &c. *Reyner* his Precepts for Practice, p. 4, 5.]

Verse 13.

For loe, he that formeth the Mountains, and createth the Winds, and declareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth; the Lord, the God of Hosts is his name.

IN the precedent Verse the Lord seeks to draw his People to himself by Mercies, he minds them of his Covenant, and tells them they were his *Israel* still, and therefore they ought not to stand it out against him, but speedily submit themselves, and meet their God with intreaties of peace, who was still ready to receive them. But least this should not work upon such indurate Sinners, the Prophet comes in this Verse to proclaime Gods Majesty, Omnipotence, Omniscience, &c. The better to affect and awaken these drowsie ones, and to make them fear; We have here a multiplicity and heap of excellent Titles given to God; for the bare naming of God is little regarded by most men, but when the Transcendent Excellencies of God, shall in variety of words, bee set forth to the life unto us, this strikes an awe and reverence in our hearts. In the words we have,

1 An elegant description of the glorious M[illegible]od, set forth in state and solemnity, by Six R[illegible]

2 Here is the note of Attention, *Loe*, or behold, *q. d.* doe not lightly pass over this, but deeply ponder, and diligently consider, the Power, and Majesty of this great God, with whom thou hast to doe.

3 Here is the reason of this glorious description of God, included in the Particle *For*, *for he that formeth the Mountains, and creates the Winds*, &c. It is he that is marching in fury against thee, who is a consuming Fire, whose Power

and Majesty thou art not able to resist; and therefore beware of provoking him to wrath against thee, by thy impenitency, for *Quot tituli, tot ora*; all these Titles, and Elogies, are as so many mouthes to call upon us, to fear the Lord, and to turn unto him. As first, It is he that formeth the mighty and the massie Mountains; therefore fear him, and turn unto him. 2. It is he that by his Almighty power creates the fierce and terrible Winds, therefore fear him, and turn unto him. 3. It is he that searcheth the heart, and triesh the reins, therefore dissemble not with him, but truly and totally turn unto him. 4. He can turn the light into darkness, and thy joy into sorrow, therefore fear to offend him, and prepare to meet him. 5. He is the most High, having the Heaven for his Throne, and the Earth for his foot-stool; therefore beware of provoking him, and return unto him. 6. He is the Lord of Hosts, and can arme all the Powers in Heaven, and Earth, and Hell against thee, therefore resist him not, but speedily prepare to meet him, with intreaties of peace, before his wrath surprize thee, and it be too late.

Adhuc non timetis Deum, qui etiam diem quo carere non potestis, auferre vobis potest? Luther.

This Verse is a Mine full of rich Treasures, I shall therefore dig for them.

1. *He formeth the Mountains.* They were not cast up by *Noahs* Flood (as some weakly have imagined) but are here expressly said to be formed, and framed by the most wise God, for the benefit and ornament of the Universe. God made them out of the rude Mass, and confused Chaos of earth, when he gathered the Waters into one place, and the dry land appeared, *Gen.* 1. 9. and it is apparent, that the Mountains were in being before *Noahs* Flood, for it is said, that *all the high Mountains were covered with waters* (Gen. 7. 19.) they were then in being, before they are said to be fixed, and setled by God (*Prov.* 8. 25.) and framed in weight and measure by him, *Isa.* 40. 12. He hath made the Mountains strong and stable, high and unmoveable, for his own glory, (*Psal.* 148. 5, 9.) and the good of Mankind. (*Psal.* 65. 5.) By the Mountains the violence of the Winds are broken, and kept from hurting us, and so they are for *Munument*. By them the Universe is adorned, and made more glorious and wonderful, and so they are for *Ornament*. By them the Vallies are kept warm, and inriched, by them they are watered with

with Springs, and showers that run down from them (Job 24. 8. Psal. 104. 10.) To them men run for shelter and defence in times of trouble, Psal. 121. 1. Josh. 2. 16. Matth. 24. 16. Heb. 11. 38. By them Cities are defended under God, against their enemies, Psal. 125. 2. upon them growes Grass for the sheep, and beasts of the field, and here they feed, Job 39. 8. Psal. 50. 11. & 148. 9. Isa. 18. 6. Here many Treasures of Metals and Minerals, of Lead, Iron, Brass, Stone, Silver, Gold, &c. are hid, Deut. 8. 9.

This should make us, 1. *Love* the Lord, who hath so curiously formed, and framed the Universe for the good of man.

2 It should make us *fear* to offend him, who by his Almighty Power hath created these mighty, massie Mountains, and before whom they tremble, and melt like Wax. These obey God, and praise him in their kind (Isa. 44. 23.) and if the Lord of these Mountains be against us, no Mountaine can fence or shelter us, Jer. 3. 23. Ezek. 38. 20. A due apprehension of Gods Majesty, will make us perform all our Duties with fear and reverence, Psal. 2. 11. Heb. 12. 29. We should take shame to our selves, for our hardness of heart, and great insensiblenss, when we consider, how the Mountains, and inanimate Creatures tremble at his presence; how much more when he is *angry*; and if these be overthrown by God in his anger, Job. 9. 5. & 28. 9. much more shall wicked men, those metaphorical Mountains, which exalt themselves against God, and his wayes, be overturned by him, Isa. 64. 1. Zech. 4. 7.

2 *Hee createth the Wind.* This is the second Prerogative Royal of the great God. By creating the Mountains and the Wind, two mighty things (under which Synecdochically are comprehended the other Works of God) the Prophet sets forth Gods Omnipotency, for it would have been too much to have enumerated all the rest of Gods glorious Works, and therefore he pitcheth on some chief ones, and leaves us to conclude of the rest. Before he had spoken of the creating of the Mountains, now he comes to speak of the Winds, which arise (as some conceive) out of those Mountains. These two differ in nature, for the one is gross and immoveable, but the Winds are of an airie, thin substance, which cannot be seen;

and

and yet such is their power that they tosse the Seas, overthrow the strongest Trees, cast down Houses, yea and overturne Mountains, when these VVinds are shut up in their bowels.

Ruach, Ventus, Spiritus, flatus.

The word *Ruach* is *Homonymous*, and hath various significations, which hath bred various Lections, and various interpretations.

1 Some read it thus, he createth the Soul or *Spirit*. *Calvin* conceives that the Prophet speaks of the spirit of man, though he excludes not the VVind, and his reason is because of that which follows, *viz. The shewing to man his thoughts.* But if this way of reasoning were valid, we may better say (*Salva semper reverentia tanto viro dignissima*) that he speaks of the Natural VVinds, because immediately before he spake of the Mountains, from whence Philosophers conceive that these VVinds proceed, and the word *Ruach* is oft put for the Natural VVinds; as *Exod.* 10. 13, 19. & 15. 10. * *Job* 28. 25.

Ab ordine verborum nulla est argumentatio.

* See *Caryl* on Job 28. 25.

2 The *Socinians* and their followers take this word for a *Spirit*, and that Spirit to be the Holy Ghost; this they doe to destroy the Deity of the Holy Ghost. See here what windy, idle, addle conceits Hereticks have, and what feeble, sandy foundations they build upon; they catch at any chrotchet which may please their humours: For it is plaine here that the Prophet speaks of the created VVind, or if they will needs read it Spirit, yet it is a created Spirit, *He createth Ruach the Wind, or the Spirit.* But the Holy Ghost is not made or Created, but proceedeth from the Father, and the Son, and is *God blessed for ever*; as is * abundantly proved by others.

* See D. *Cheynel* on the Trinity, chap. 4. p. 31. D. *Owen* against *Biddle*, Chap. 15. p. 351. D. *Arnold* Religio Sotin. p. 131. &c. D. *Cloppenburgh* and *Estwick* against *Biddle*, and above all (as having much in a little room) The Blasphemer slaine with the sword of the Spirit.

As for the Natural causes of the VVind, Philosophers differ; Some conceive that the Sun drawing up Vapours and Exhalations, and they falling down again by violence, become Winds by the coldness of the middle region.

2 Others conceive, that the aire being pent up in the Vaults and Caves of the earth, having a vent doe break forth, and

and so spread into Winds, and for this they bring *Psal.* 135. 7. *Jer.* 10. 13. & 51. 16. *Hee causeth the Vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth, he maketh Lightning for the rain, and bringeth the wind out of his treasuries*; That is, say they, out of his Vaults and Concavities, wherein it is kept as in a Treasury. But God himself, who hath made the Wind, tells us plainly, that we know not whence it comes, nor whither it goes, *Joh.* 3. 7. we may therefore well be ignorant of that, which God in his wisdome hath hidden from us. An humble ignorance in deep Mysteries, whether Natural, or Supernatural; whether in the works, or the Word of God, is better and safer than proud curiosity.

Especubus & locis abditis, in quibus velut in Thesauris continet ventos. V. Polan. Syntag. l. 5. c. 17. Robinsons Types of Christ. p. 92. and especially Mr. *Caryl* on Job 28. 25.

VVe have many Reasons to bless God for the *Wind*. It is indeed a common Blessing, but yet we could not live without it.

1. If the Aire be thick, dark, and unwholsome, the VVind cleareth and *purgeth the aire* for the health of our Bodies, and for the preservation of the Creatures. They dispel noysome Vapours, and therefore are called *Scopa mundi*, the worlds Beesoms, with which God sweeps his great House, the World.

2. If we want *Rain*, the Winds carry the Clouds, and bring us rain; at the Prayers of *Elijah*, after three years drought, the Heavens were darkned with Clouds and Wind, whence came a great rain, 1 *King.* 18. 45.

3. They *cool the Aire* in the heat of Summer, and help to refresh us.

4. They help our *Ships to sayl*, and bring Commodities from all Nations to us; and help our Mills to grind our Corn.

5. They serve for the *Miraculous help* of Gods Church and People. When the Lord had brought *Israel* by a strong hand out of *Egypt*, hee caused the Sea to goe back by a strong East-wind, and made the Sea dry land for his people to pass thorough, *Exod.* 14. 21.

6. They help to *execute Gods Judgements* on the wicked. VVith an East-wind the Lord brought Locusts, and Grasshoppers on *Egypt* to devour their fruit (*Exod.* 10. 13. 19.) and by a VVest-wind hee drove them away again. *Theodosius* praying against his enemies, the winds brought

back the enemies Arrowes on their owne heads, which made *Claudian* cry,

Omnipotens dixit o Deus, cui militat æther,
Et conjurati veniunt ad classica venti!

Ascribe not them great VVinds to Conjurers, Witches, Devils, &c. The Winds are Gods servants, and doe readily obey his commands (*Psal.* 148. 8. *Matth.* 8. 26.) and not the Devils. Satan without Gods leave cannot raise so much wind as will toss a feather. He could doe nothing in this kind against *Job*, till he had a Commission from God, *Job* 1. 16, 19.

3 This is not all, for the Prophet descends to man, and tells us, that since God made him, he also can *tell him his thoughts*, meditations, and purposes. He can tell what Language men have in their hearts, and what they talk within themselves, as the rich fool did, *Luke* 12. 17. Our words are not so intelligible to men, as our thoughts are to God. Christ knew what was in man, hee knew their thoughts (*John* 2. *ult.*) and therefore he answered his enemies many times, not according to their words, but according to their thoughts, *Matth.* 8. 20. yea God knows our thoughts before we think them, and our conceits before we conceive them, hee understands them afarre off, *Psal* 139. 2. he being *intimo nostro intimior*, nearer to us than our flesh is to our bones; hee knowes our thoughts *in Posse* from all eternity; so great is his Omniscience! As a man that knoweth what Roots he hath in his Garden, though there be no flower appearing, yet he can say, when the Spring comes, this and this will come up. So it is here, God knowes our frames, our Principles, our Projects, and what the issue will be, nothing is hid from his All-seeing eye. The words are diversly read.

1 Some refer the *Affix* to God, thus, Hee declareth to man his owne mind and meditation, and tells him what hee intends to doe, (*Esay* 41. 26. *Amos* 3. 7.) thus he revealed his mind to *Abraham* before hee would destroy *Sodome*, and Christ reveals his secrets to his Disciples, *John* 15. 15.

2 The Septuagint mistaking the Original, read it thus,

He-

He declareth unto man his Christ, *Meshicho, Christum, vel Unctum suum*; but the word is * *Masecho*, what is his thought. But the proper scope of the Text, is to convince the *Israelites*, that they had not to doe with men, but with the Omniscient God, who searcheth the heart, and trieth the reins, and knoweth the hidden things of man, even the most secret turnings and windings, ploddings and purposes of the Soul, so as he cannot be deceived, neither will he be mocked. A man may know much by himself, but God knowes more; our Consciences may accuse us of some things, but God is greater than our Consciences, and knoweth all things.

* *Quid sit cogitatio vel meditatio sua, vel eloquium suum, nam Suach est secum cogitare, vel secum colloqui. Sanctius.*

Q. *But how doth God declare unto man his Thoughts?*

Ans. Divers wayes. 1. Sometimes he discovers and disappoints the most secret aymes, and intentions of men, and so makes their thoughts visible to the world.

2 By his Ministers, they opening the Word of God, which is a Soul-searching Word, doe discover to men the thoughts, and intents of their hearts, *Heb.* 4. 12.

3 Sometimes without the Word, God by his Spirit checks men, and convinceth the Conscience of the vanity, and sinful imaginations which are in them.

He maketh the morning darkness.

The Prophet goes on still to shew the Almighty Power of God, who can turn the brightest morning into dreadful darkness, and the most glorious day into a dismal night. If he be angry: he can make the morning not only dark, but *darkness* it self in the Abstract; that is, exceeding dark.

How the Abstract doth augment the signification, see my Schools Guard. Rule 36.

2 Others read the words thus, *He maketh the morning and the darkness*, that is, he maketh both Day and Night. God shews his Power, not only in creating the World, but also in governing the whole course of Nature continually, exactly ordering the Vicissitude and change of Day and Night. It is he that makes the Light and the Darkness, in the morning he makes the light to arise out of darkness; and in the evening he makes the darkness to follow the light. This sense is good. But the first I look upon as most genuine from the next.

He treadeth upon the high places of the earth. This is true, both in a Literal, and in a Metaphorical sense.

1 Take the words *Literally* for the highest Hills, and the lofty things of the World, even these are subject unto God, and lye at his feet; he treads upon all worldly glory and excellency. As Heaven is his Throne, so the Earth, even the highest places of the earth are his foot-stool. Hee treads upon high Mountains, high Buildings, high Fortifications and walled Cities, all which are comprehended under the name of *High places* (Deut. 32. 13.) these hee turns upside down, when ever pleaseth him. This is the most proper sense. But take it *Metaphorically*, either for the high places of the earth, where * Altars were erected to Idols (as *Numb.* 33. 52. 2 *Chron.* 11. 15. & 33. 3. *Jer.* 32. 35. *Ezek.* 16. 16.) even these will God tread upon and destroy, *Levit.* 26. 30.

Omnia subjicit quantumvis munita & excelsa, & propter altitudinem inaccessa. Lavelius.

* *Bamah. excelsa, ita dicuntur vel à celsitudine montium in quibus aræ ad sacrificandum constituerentur; vel ab ipsis aris quæ altæ sunt.*

2 If you take it for the high and lofty of the earth, even these Gods hand doth reach, yea and his feet tread upon. Hee makes the proud of the earth his foot-stool, *Psal.* 110. 1. though they be high, yet he will make them know, that there is an higher than they, *Eccles.* 5. 8. though they bee *mighty*, yet they shall know, that there is one who is *Mighty*, who pulls down the mighty from their seats, and is terrible even to the Kings of the earth, *Psal.* 76. 12. *Esay* 2. 10. *Luke* 1. 52. Now though the literal sense bee here principally intended, yet the Mystical and Metaphorical sense would not be excluded.

V. Ravaneh in V. excelsus.

Q. *But who is it that doth these great and glorious things?*

A. The Prophet tells you, *it is Jehovah the God of Hosts*, that is his name, a name full of Power, Majesty, and Excellency, and therefore to be reverenced of all his people.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *God is Omnipotent.* Creation is a work of Omnipotency; but that is here ascribed to God; it is he that formeth the Mountains, and createth the Winds, and turns Light into darkness, and hath all Creatures at his command, and there-

fore

fore he must needs be Almighty. Man can make something out of something: but to create the Universe out of nothing, and that by the word of his mouth; this speaks his wonderful Omnipotency, *Psal.* 33. 6, 9. He is able to doe whatsoever he will, *Psal.* 115. 3. yea his Power is beyond his Will, for of stones he could raise up Children unto *Abraham*, but hee will not, *Matth.* 3. 9. There is nothing too hard for him, no difficulties can hinder him in his working; *Job* 4. 9. *Matth.* 19. 26. *Luke* 1. 37. Those impossibilities in nature which are the reproach of Physitians, yet are they Gods Cure. The power that is in the Creature is but derivative, and by participation; but all Power is in God perfectly, eminently, infinitely, and originally.

Fear then to offend him; chuse rather to displease all the world than to displease him: (*Jer.* 5: 21, 22.) they can but kill the body, but he can kill both body and soul, *Mat.* 10. 28. A Tenant, especially if he be a Tenant at will, is afraid of displeasing his Landlord, who can when ever he pleaseth cast him out of all. The men of *Tyre* and *Sidon* made peace with *Herod*, because their Land was nourished by the Kings Land, and he might doe them a displeasure, *Acts* 12. 20. Beleeve and fear his Power now, else you are like ere long to feel it, for *though he be slow to anger, yet is he great in power, and will by no means acquit the wicked*, Nahum. 1. 3. See Mr. *Case* his Morning Lect. in *quarto* p. 58.

2 Serve him with *fear*, and doe all that wee doe to him with the greatest reverence. So did *Job*, ch. 40. 4. & 42. 5. & *Esay* 6. 5. let us readily doe his commands. If he doe but call to any of the Creatures, they stand up together, as ready to execute whatever their great Lord and Master commands them, *Esay* 48. 13. yea so pliant are they to doe his will, that they contradict their owne natures to serve him. Fire descends from Heaven at his command, and the fluent Waters stand as a wall to defend his people, and destroy their enemies: which may shame us out of our rebellion, and disloyalty, when we see how the inferiour Creatures serve him with one consent.

2 It likewise serves for singular *comfort*, and that many wayes.

1 It may be thou hast great enemies coming against thee, yet remember still, that there is a greater than they. Suppose

Nations, all Nations should come against them, yet compared to God, they are but *as the drop of a bucket, nothing, less than nothing*, Esay 40. 12, &c. & 51. 12, 13. Rom. 8. 31. There are more with us than are with them; with them is but an arme of flesh, but with us is the Almighty, not as a base Spectator, but as an Assister, and fighter for us, 2 Chron. 32. 7, 8.

2 It may be thou art troubled with strong corruptions, why goe unto this strong God, there is nothing too hard for him. Though thy sins have been habitual, customary, con-naturall sins, yet he is the God of Nature, and can change Nature. Though we cannot make a Black-more white, yet he can, Jer. 13. 23. though thy sins have been of a Crimson dye, yet he is able to make them white as Snow, Esay 1. 18.

3 Art thou troubled with great *temptations*, and sad afflictions, yet remember God is Almighty, and can make Medicines of these Poisons; and will in the conclusion turn all to thy good, Rom. 8. 28. and *therefore be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, Ephes. 6. 10.

See Mr. *Gournal*, and Doct. *Gouge* on Eph. 6. 10.

4 It may comfort us against *temptation*. Thou fearest, that thou shalt never be able to hold out; walk humbly with thy God, and then thou needst not fear what Man, or Devil can doe unto thee; for stronger is he that is in us, than he that is in the world, 1 Joh. 4. 4. Did we stand by our own strength we were undone, for in his own strength shall no man bee strong; but we are kept by the mighty Power of God, through faith unto salvation, 1 Pet. 1. 5. Though we be weak, yet our Redeemer is strong, Jer. 50. 33, 34. and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against us. Let the world rage, the Devil roar, and corruption fret, yet God is greater than all, and none shall be able to pull them out of his hand, Joh. 10. 28, 29. He that hath called us hath promised to keep us, he is both able, and willing to doe it, Esay 42. 5, 6.

In te stas & non stas. Aug.

5 It may comfort us against *the fear of death*; what though thy Body lye rotting in the Grave, and Worms consume thy flesh, yet God is Almighty, and can raise these vile bodies, and make them like unto Christs glorious Body, Phil. 3. 21. Though for a time we may lye in the dust, yet the time is at hand, When we shall awake and sing, Esay 26. 19. Not that made all things out of nothing, he can raise us out of nothing.

thing. Thy ashes are precious in his sight, and all thy bones are kept by him, yea the very hairs of thy head are numbred.

6 It may comfort and assure us, that the *Jewes* in Gods due time shall be called. Though now they be a scattered, cursed, contemptible people, for their rejecting Christ, yet the Apostle argues from Gods Power, and comforts us with this, that God is able to raise them up again, *Rom.* 11. 23.

See more Uses in Mr. *Perkins* on the Creed, the first Art. 1 Vol p. 136, 142, &c.

2 Obs. *The serious consideration of Gods Omnipotency, should move us to meet him by repentance.* No wise man will stand it out against a potent enemy, that is far too strong for him. We are all by nature Traytors, and Rebels against God, hee is marching against us in wrath, and wee have no way to help our selves, but to meet him, and humble our selves before him (1 *Pet.* 5, 6.) imploring his pitty, and his pardon. Hence it is, that the Lord so oft in Scripture, doth set forth to the life his glorious Majesty, and transcendent Soveraignty, (*Job* 9. & 36. 24. to 33. & *cha.* 37. & 38. & 39. & 40. *Esay* 40. 12. to 27. *Jer.* 10. 6, 7. *Amos* 9. 8. & 9. 6.) We should not only tremble at Gods Word (*Esay* 66. 2.) but also at the consideration of his glorious Majesty, appearing both in his Works of Creation, and Providence.

3 Obs. *It is Gods Prerogative Royal to be the heart-searching God.* None can exactly and thoroughly know the heart but he alone, he only is that ὁ καρδιογνώστης, *Deus cordiscius*, the Heart-seeing, and the Heart-searching God, 1 *Chron.* 28. 9. *Prov.* 17. 3. *Jer.* 17. 9, 10. *Acts* 1. 24. & 15. 8. *Rev.* 2. 23. Hee knowes all the secret plots and projects, all the turnings and windings of our deceitful souls. Hee knows not only what is in our hearts at present, but also what hath been, and what will be there, *Psal.* 139. 1, 2. *Esay* 46. 10. The Lord trieth the heart, as the furnace trieth the gold; when Mettals come to bee put into the Furnace, there is a great deal of dross in them, so that the Mettal sometimes can hardly be discerned by the Artificer, till the Furnace hath separated the dross from the mettal; so the All-seeing eye of God, which is compared to a flaming fire (*Revel.* 1. 14.) searcheth and separateth good from evil. For,

1 God hath made all hearts, and therefore he must needs know what is in them. They are heells, and brutish, that will

will not acknowledge this, *Psal.* 94. 8, 9, 10, 11. Every Artificer knowes best the thing that he hath made; a man that makes a Watch, knowes every wheel of the Watch, and every Pin, which another cannot discern. Known to God are all his Works, *Acts* 15. 18. but the chief of Gods Works is Man, and therefore mans heart must needs be known to him: and if the spirit of man knowes what is in man (*Prov.* 20. 27. 1 *Cor.* 2. 11.) then God who hath made that spirit must much more know what is in man, *Job* 22. 24, 25. & 1 *Job.* 3. 20.

2 He takes the wise in their owne Plots, which hee could not doe if he did not know their hearts, *Job* 5. 13. 1 *Cor.* 3. 19. Of all men God delights to befool the grand *Politicians* of the World; he takes them in their owne traps, and blowes them up, as it were with their own Gun-powder. As a man that will goe beyond a man in discourse, hee must know the Arguments which he will bring, that so hee may bring other Arguments beyond them; so God out-shoots the *Achitophels* of the World in their owne bow. *Haman* was a subtile man, and thought he had made all sure, but we know how the Lord turned his Plot upon his owne pate. In the thing wherein he dealt subtilly, and proudly, the Lord was above him, *Exod.* 18. 11. *Pharaoh* was a subtile Persecutor, yet see how God takes him in his owne Net, *Exod.* 1. 10. hee would work wisely, and will kill all the Male-Children of the Hebrews, yet see how God blasts his Project, for amongst them he saved *Moses*, yea *Pharaohs* Daughter shall bring him up at Court, who shall be *Pharaohs* destruction. Many Politicians walk in the Clouds, as if the Lord should not see them, *Psal.* 94. 7. but they must know, that the Lord is a God of knowledge, and all their actions are weighed by him, 1 *Sam.* 2. 3.

3 God is the Judge of all the World; and this hee could not be, if he did not know the hearts, as well as the acts of men. How should he distribute Rewards and Punishments according to mens deserving, if he knew not the intents and thoughts of their hearts? If God did not search the heart, how many secret sins would goe unpunished, and many secret wrongs done to the godly and innocent man goe unrevenged? The Lord therefore searcheth the heart, that hee may

give

give to every one according to his works, *Jer.* 17. 9, 10.

Obj. *Prov.* 25. 3. *The heart of the King is unsearchable, how then can God search the heart?*

A. He speaks in respect of men, God useth many times to endue his Vice-gerents with such depth of wisdome, that it surpasseth the ordinary judgement of Subjects to finde them out; but it doth not surpass Gods knowledge. God could not turn Kings hearts if he knew them not, *Prov.* 21. 1. When we are to deal with a man whose disposition wee are not acquainted withall, we know not what Motives will perswade him; whereas if we have to deal with one that we know, then we know what Motives will perswade him; so the Lord that made the hearts of Kings, he knows how to perswade them, and win upon them.

2 This searching must not be taken properly, but figuratively; as for man he must search, and by discourse and going from one thing to another, labour to finde out a matter; but it is not so with God, who is perfectly wise, and knowes every thing in it self without discoursing. God is all eye. Suppose a mans whole body were an eye, he need not then to turn himself to see things, for he would see on every side; but he that hath but one eye must turn himself about to see things. But God who is all eye, and seeth into the nature of things, needs no turning about to discourse, and so to search out things, as we doe: and therefore one said well, Things that are spoken after the manner of men, must be understood according to the Majesty of God.

3 This Metaphor of searching, is taken, 1. Either from *Students*, who when they come to a hard point, they are put to a great deal of pains to search out the matter before they can know the depth of it. Or, 2. From *Refiners*, the Lord tries the heart (*Prov.* 17. 3.) not only as a Load-stone, but like a Furnace to separate the gold from the dross; when God comes to search the heart of his Elect, he hath a power beyond all other refiners, for look what is good, hee makes it better, and what is nought hee takes away, and makes it good. He turns the vilest earth into the purest Gold, and the vilest Mettal, a proud heart, he turns into an humble heart. Hee casts a Christ-despising-soul into the Furnace, and it comes out a high-prizing soul of Christ.

Obj. *How is it said, that God only knowes and searcheth the hearts of men* (1 King. 8. 39.) *whereas it is said, that a man knows his own heart* (1 Cor. 2. 11.) *yea* Samuel *could tell* Saul *all that was in his heart,* 1 Sam. 9. 19. *and if the evil Angels know our hearts,* Joh. 13. 2. *then good Angels much more.*

Ans. There is so great a difference between Creatures knowing of the hearts, and the Creators knowledge of them, that ours is nothing in comparison of his.

1 They differ in respect of their *Original*; God knows the heart of himself, and needs not that any man should tell him, *John* 2. *ult.* But Angels and Men know by revelation from God, or revelation from others. Thus God revealed to *Samuel*, which was *Saul*, that should bee King of *Israel*, 1 Sam. 9. 15, 17. Thus *Elisha* knew the covetousness of *Gehazi*, and *Peter* the Hipocrisie of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*. Thus the good Angels know what is in us by Revelation, and the evil ones by the working of our fancies, they know what will take with us, 1 *King.* 22. 22.

2 In respect of *Certainty*, we know things but conjecturally, darkly, and by halves; but God knoweth all things exactly, and perfectly; he knowes us better than wee know our selves. Christ knew *Peters* heart, when hee knew it not himself; and God knew *Hazaels* heart, when himself could not beleeve the wickedness which was there. Thus hee knowes our thoughts afarre off (*Psal.* 139. 2.) men may see the thoughts of others near hand, when they begin to break out, and bewray themselves in the face and countenance, in gestures, words, and looks; by these we sometimes pump out what is in men, *Prov.* 20. 5. But this is but conjecturall, and we are oft deceived, as we see in *David*, he thought *Absaloms* purpose had been sincere, in going to fulfill his Vow at *Hebron*, and that *Achitophel* had been a faithful Counsellor. Thus the Disciples took *Judas* to be like themselves, and therefore when Christ said, *One of you shall betray mee*, every one asked, *Master, is it I?* But God did most certainly know *Absaloms* Hypocrisie, *Achitophels* Policy, and *Judas* his Treacherie. In our thoughts there is the object which we think on, and the impress of it, as it lieth in our fancy; and this the Angels being Spirits may know, and see what is in the fancy. But now to make up a full thought, there must be an act that passeth

seth on this object, that carrieth with it an Affirmative, or Negative, for an hundred men may think on one and the same object, and yet they may act diversly; now because the mind of man may work several ways on one and the same object, the Angels cannot certainly know the hearts of men, which made the Devils Oracles to speak so ambiguously, because they knew not certainly what should come to pass. But God hath a clear and exact knowledge of all things, and perfectly knowes all the turnings and windings, all the imaginations and thoughts of our hearts, whether good or bad, sudden or deliberate, past, present, or to come, *Gen. 6. 5. Job 42. 2. Psal. 44. 21.* He knowes our thoughts before we think them, *Deut. 31. 21.* though men have fair words, yet hee knowes they have many times foul hearts, *Deut. 5. 28. 29.* God takes notice of every wanton thought which is in our hearts, which made *Job* (ch. 31. 1.) to make a covenant with his eyes, that he might not so much as think on a Maid, least he should sin against God, and displease him, who takes notice of all the motions of our hearts. God took notice of *Saels murderous thoughts* towards *David*, when he was playing before him, he thought to have murdered him; and of *Felix* his covetous thoughts, when he sent so oft for *Paul*, thinking that money should have been given him. But God in goodness to us, hath lockt up the hearts of men from the knowledge of men, for the preservation of Humane society, for man is a sociable Creature; now if there were a window made in the Soul of every man, to know what is in him, there would bee no living one by another, so vile and fierce we are by nature, (*Titus 3. 3.*) every one hath several ends, and if we could see whose heart opposeth us in the pursuit of them, we should hate them. Besides, every man hath secret sins, which if all the world should know, we should be ashamed to look one another in the face, and afraid one of another.

1 Woe then to *Quakers*, who assume to themselves Gods Prerogative Royal, of knowing the hearts. How oft have they told us, that they know mens hearts (when it may bee they know not their names) so soon as ever they see their faces, they know who are Hypocrites, or prophane, at first sight. But it is no wonder, that those who have printed that they are equal to God, as holy as God, as just as God, as good as

God; if they also say, they are as knowing as God. These high-flown Atheistical ones assume more to themselves, than the very glorified Saints or Angels dare doe. Such prodigious Pride, and Blasphemy, will be punisht with some signall fall.

2 This must *humble* us in all our approaches before this Omniscient, Heart-searching God. We have not to doe with men, but with the All-seeing God, who cannot, and will not be mocked. We are apt to think highly of our selves, but God knowes that by us which we know not by our selves. Wee know but in part, but he knowes us thorowly; and if our Conscience doe accuse us of something, yet he is greater than our Conscience, and knoweth all things. Men may *secretly* and *subtilly* hide their sins from men, but nothing is hid from God, he sees our secret sins in the light of his countenance. It is dangerous to plot any thing either against him, or any thing which relates unto him; for as he sees mens sins, so hee hath power to punish them. Woe then to such as oppose Gods Truth, these oppose God, and rob his people of the choycest purchase. 2. Such as oppose his Embassadours doe oppose him, he accounts the indignities done to them as done to himself. 3. Such as abuse his people, and despise them for their puriey, despise God who made them so.

3 It must make us serious and *sincere* in all that we doe; since we have to doe with a God that searcheth the heart, and ponders the spirits of men; and if they be but a graine too light, his beam will soon discover it, *Prov.* 16. 2. Did we but set the Lord alwaies before us, it would keep us from falling, either on the right hand, or on the left, *Psal.* 16. 8. *David* kept all Gods Precepts, because he knew that all his wayes were before him, *Psal.* 119. 168. So *Job* 34. 21, 22. There is much in the eye of men to keep us from sin, and quicken us to duty, how much more in Gods All-seeing eye, *Job* 24. 17. He looks upon Sinners with a Vindictive eye. It is said of *Hercules*, and some others, that they had such sparkling eyes that they terrified men, so that they durst not look upon them. This is most true of God in a Spiritual sense; if he but look on *Pharaoh*, and his Host, it puts them all into terror, *Exod.* 14. 24. yea if he but look upon the earth, which never sinned, it trembles before him, *Psal.* 97. 4. Men may dissemble

with

with men, but there is none can deceive God. No Sinner is more hated of God than the Hypocrite, because no sin is so directly opposite to his Nature. *Jehu* his zeal was, to settle himself in *Ahabs* Throne, but God sees through such Tiffany-designs, and sayes to such, as the Prophet said to the Wife of *Jeroboam*, *Come in thou Wife of* Jeroboam, *why feignest thou thy self to be another than thou art?* God will one day smite such painted walls, *Esau* a cunning Hunter, may get the Venison of this World, but it is plaine, sincere, single-hearted *Jacob* that gets the blessing. Let us therefore alwaies walk as in the presence of God, as *Enoch* (*Gen.* 5. 24.) *Abraham*, (*Gen.* 17. 1.) and *Hezekiah* did, *Esay* 38. 3.

4 This should make us to keep a strict watch over our *Thoughts*. God is a Spirit, and he more especially eyes the bent of our spirits. It is not so much our words and workes, as our hearts which the Lord ponders. So that what the Apostle saith of our *words*, is most true of our *Thoughts*; he that offendeth not in thought, the same is a perfect man. He is right indeed, who is right within. When the Lord comes to search men, he ransacks the heart, and observes what imaginations and thoughts lodge there, and judgeth of men accordingly, *Gen.* 6. 5.

But of this at large, in my Comment. on 2 Tim. 3. 2. p. 28, 29.

5 It may inform us, that the holy Scriptures are the Word of God, because of that lively, powerful, heart-searching excellency that is in them, *Heb.* 4. 12, 13. Mens words are dead, but here is living water; sharp and quick, discovering the very thoughts and intents of the heart; wee should not then quarrel with the Word, when it nakedly discovers our selves unto our selves, but fall on our faces and worship God, confessing that he is in his Ministers of a truth (1 *Cor.* 14. 24, 25.) We must bless, and not blaspheme, as some that say, *The Devil is in the Minister, he hath some Familiar, else how could he know my thoughts?* when it is not we that know your thoughts, but it is God who searcheth your hearts, and by his Word doth discover the secrets of your hearts, though wee know not your faces. It is the Lord who directs the Word to the hearts of his people. *Austin* reports of himself, that when he had been Preaching to his owne people, he fell from the subject he intended, to confute the *Manichees*. When hee came home, he said to those at dinner with him, Did you not

observe how I went from the subject intended? they answered yes. Then said he, *Surely the Lord did this for the good of some soul that was present.* Not long after came one *Firmus*, a Merchant to him, with tears in his eyes, blessing God, that had brought him to confute the *Manichees*, whereby he was converted. God is a free Agent, and works when he will, on whom he will, and by whom he will.

6 It serves for *Consolation* many waies.

1 It may comfort us against the *reproaches* and slanders of the wicked. This comforted *Job*, when his friends accused him falsely, that *the Lord knew the way which he took*, Job 23. 10. q. d. Though my friends accuse me for an Hypocrite, yet Lord thou knowest not only an act or two of mine, but thou knowest the very way that I take; He knowes the bent of our Souls, and will reward us accordingly. This upheld *Jeremy* under this very temptation, *Jer.* 15. 10, 18. and *Paul*, 1 Cor. 4. 3, 4, 5. The godly have hidden *Manna*, which comforts them against the calumnies of the world; and a *white Stone*, which armes them against the black Stones which are thrown at them by the world; and a *new Name*, to comfort them against the nick-names of the world.

2 It may comfort us in all our troubles, that the Lord sees them, *Exod.* 3. 9. *Acts* 7. 34. Our groanings are not hid from him, *Psal.* 38. 9. Though wheels goe cross, yet God hath a wheel in those wheels; Though wee know not how, yet he knowes how, and when it is best to deliver his, 2 *Pet.* 2. 9.

3 It may comfort us in point of *Weakness*. It may be thou canst not express thy mind in words, I but the Lord knows our thoughts, and desires, afarre off, even before we think them, and our words before we speak them. Before we call he answers; and if we have but sincere desires; he hath promised to hear them, *Psal.* 10. 17. It may bee that thou art under a Temtation, and canst see no faith, nor love in thy heart; yea but God can. Grace is Gods hand-writing in our hearts, (*Jer.* 31. 33.) which he can read, when we cannot; so that as *Paul* said, I know no evil by my self, yet am I not thereby justified; so mayest thou say, I know no good by my self, yet herein am I not condemned.

4 It may incourage us, to be much in secret with God, in secret

* See more in Mr. *Dyke* on the Heart, cha. 31. p. 397, &c.

secret Prayer, Meditation, and Communion, *Thy Father which sees in secret, he shall reward thee openly.* Thy secret obedience shall have open recompence. *Jeremy* the Prophet for secret, had his life given him; when the King had his eyes put out, and many Nobles were slaine.

4. Obs. *The Lord can turn our light into darkness.* He can turn the morning (which usually brings light with it) into the darkest night. Thus he dealt with *Egypt*, he brought a dismal darkness on them for three dayes, even such darkness as might be felt. *Exod.* 10. 21, 22. So when Christ was Crucified, there came a great darkness on the Land, *Mat.* 27. 45. If we provoke the Lord to anger, he can quickly turn our day into night (*Amos* 5. 8.) and our mirth into mourning. He is the God of Nature, and can when pleaseth him invert the order of Nature, and strike us with gross darkness. The Light is a pleasant thing, but the light of the Gospel, that Supernatural Light, oh how pleasant and precious is that! We may better want the Sun in the Firmament (for that is but a common blessing) than the glorious light of the Gospel, which shewes us the way to eternal life. We should therefore bee *thankful* to God for all manner of Light, and take heed of offending him, who can at once deprive us both of Natural and Supernatural light. He can make our Sun to set at Noon, and darkness to surprise us in the brightest day, and make us run from Sea and Sea to heare a Sermon, and it shall not be granted to us. *Amos* 8. 9, 10, 11, 12. Let us then walk in the light whilst we have the light, least our unthankfulness deprive us of it. *John* 12. 35. *Rom.* 13. 12, 13.

See the misery of darkness both Natural and Spiritual, in my Com. on Psal. 82. 5.

5. Obs. If we take the words in the second sense, then observe, *That God is the Maker both of Day and Night.* He creates Light, and he creates Darkness; he makes the Morning, and the Evening; the rising, and the setting Sun give praises unto him (*Gen.* 1. 5.): and we are bound to him for both: 1. That he hath given us the Day wherein to serve him; and secondly, that he hath given us the Night, wherein to rest, that we might be fitted for his service.

6. Obs. *God is the most High.* This appears in that all high places are subject to him, whether you take them Literally, or Metaphorically, he treads upon all the high places of the earth, all Mountains, all Idols, all high conceits of men, and what-

See my Com. on Psal. 82. 7.

Quicquid magnum est & excelsum in terra, huic subjicitur. Luther.

whatsoever exalts it self against his Kingdom, he will bring it down. If he touch any of these Mountains they presently vanish into smoak, *Esay* 64. 1. *Jam.* 4. 6. 1 *Pet.* 5. 5.

7 Obs. *God is Jehovah.* This is the most proper Name of God, and therefore is so frequently given to him in the Old Testament. S. *Jerome* observes, that there are ten Names given to God in Scripture, of which Jehovah is the chief and most proper, and is never given to any but only unto God. It sets forth his eternal, infinite, incomprehensible Self-being, and serves to distinguish him from Idols, which have no life or being in them. Hence it is called, Gods glorious and fearful Name, *Deut.* 28. 58. To let pass those Jewish and Rabbinical nicities, and quiddities about this Name, we have the sum and substance of it in *Exod.* 3. 14. & 34. 6. *Revel.* 1. 4, 8. *He is Alpha, and Omega, who is, who was, and who is to come.*

This Name implies
1. Gods Self existency.
2. Eternity.
3. Soveraignty.
4. Immutability.
5. Fidelity.

1 God is Jehovah, one that hath his being in himself, and of himself, and from no other. He is an absolute, perfect, independent Self-being. All Creatures depend on him (*Psal.* 104. 27.) but he needs none of us, *Job* 22. 3. & 35. 6, 7. All have their * being, and their well-being from him, and therefore great reason we should live unto his praise, *Prov.* 16. *Act.* 17. 28. *Rom.* 11. *ult.*

* D. *Arrowsmith* on John 1. 3. p. 46. 59

2 He is an Eternal Self-being, without beginning or ending, from everlasting to everlasting, he is God, *Heb.* 13. 8. of all Gods Names this doth most fully set forth Gods eternal Essence. This must comfort us in all our distresses, when all other beings fail, yet God is an eternal being. When the Cisterns are broken, yet this Fountain abides; when Fathers and Mothers dye, yet he lives for ever, *Psal.* 18. 46. & 102. 27, 28. Our Fathers where are they? and the Prophets doe not live for ever; but the God of the Prophets lives for ever. *Zach.* 1. 5.

3 He hath supream, absolute, and unlimited Soveraignty over

over all. Hee is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. All have their dependance on him, but hee depends on none.

4 *Immutability*, hee is I Am, still the same, there is not in him so much as a shadow of changing, *Mal.* 3.6. *James* 1.17.

5 *Fidelity*, he is most true both in his Threatnings and Promises. They are all *Yea, and Amen*, and shall certainly be fulfilled first or last to Gods people.

[See more of this Name Jehovah, in *Zegedines, Loc. com. p.* 599. *Rivet* on Exod. 3. 13. Doct. *Gouge* his *Arrowes*, on Exod. 17. 15. p. 317, &c. *V. Wilsons Dict. & Ravanel. in V. Jehova & præ aliis Gerard. Loc. com. Loc.* 2. *Vol.* 1. *p.* 225. *ad p.* 235. *Edit. alt. Una cum Illyrico in calce clavis Script. p.* 354. *ad p.* 360. *Binchius Mel. Theolog. Loc.* 2. *p.* 30. *Pullers Miscel. Lib.* 2. *cap.* 6. *p.* 201. *& l.* 4. *cap.* 13. *p.* 550.]

Concerning Gods other Attributes, see Doct. *Preston* on the Attributes, *Stock*, *Larkham*, *Church* his *Miscelan. Zanchius, & Lessius de Attributis*, Mr. *Leighs* Body of Divinity, *lib.* 2. *c.* 2. M. *Randal* his Treat. of God, and Christ, *p.* 19, *&c.* Mr. *Norton* his Orthodox Evangel. p. 4. 10.

Obs. 8. *God is the Lord of Hosts.*

This Title is oft given to God, as 1 *Sam.* 1. 3. *&* 4. 4. *&* 2 *Sam.* 5. 10. *Psal.* 24. 10. God is the soveraign Lord of all Creatures, whether visible or invisible, reasonable or unreasonable, living or livelesse, they are all his, not only * because he created them, and preserveth them, but because he governs them, so that they stand continually ready prest for his service, when ever he shall command them, *Psal.* 103. 21. *Isa.* 45. 12. God hath all Armies in Heaven, Earth, and Hell at his command.

* *Elohe, Deus*, one of Gods Titles in the Text, is a contract of *Eloah*, and in the plural number *Elohim*, this is one of the most frequent Names of God in Scripture: and denotes unto us that God is the Creator, Governeur, and Judge of the World. On this Title see my Com. on Psal. 82. 1. & *Binchius Mellif. Theol. P.* 1. *p.* 30.

1 He hath *the hosts of Heaven at his beck*. The Angels are ready to execute his will, *Gen.* 32. *Numb.* 22. 22. *Job* 25. 3. The Stars of Heaven fight for his people, *Judg.* 5. 20. *Isa.* 40. 26. Thunder and Lightning, Wind and Hayl observe his commands, *Job* 37. 4. *&* 38. 24. *Psal.* 18. 14. *&* 29. 3. *&* 13. 5, 7. *&* 148. 8.

2 He hath *Terrestrial Armies* at his command; as 1 All men whether good or bad, he can make them execute his will even against their own. 2 The Beasts of the field, *Levit.* 26. 22. 2 *King.* 2. 24. & 17. 25. 3 He hath Armies of Insects, and inferiour Animals to vexe his enemies withall, as Froggs, Flies, Lice, Caterpillars, Locusts, &c. *Exod.* 8. *Deut.* 28. 28. *Joel* 1. 4. & 2. 25. *Amos* 7. 1. and if these will not doe; he hath the *Sea* to drown men, *Gen.* 7. 11. *Exod.* 14. 28. and the fire to burn them, *Gen.* 19. and the earth to swallow them up alive, *Exod.* 15. 12. *Numb.* 16. 30. & 26. 10.

3 All *the Devils in Hell* are Gods Serjeants to arrest the wicked, and his Jaylors to keep them fast till the Judgement of the great Day. But of this see more at large before on *Vers.* 10. *Obs.* 5.

AN

AN EXPOSITION, WITH Practical OBSERVATIONS UPON The Fifth Chapter of *Amos*.

VERSE I.

Hear yee this word which I take up against you, even a lamentation, O house of Israel.

IN this Chapter wee have the summe and substance of the fourth Sermon of the Prophet *Amos*, which contains a Lamentation for the Captivity, and utter desolation, which was coming upon the Kingdome of *Israel* for their obstinacy and Idolatry.

Where wee have 1 A short *Exordium* to quicken attention, verse 1. *Hear this word which I take up against you.*

2 Here is a Commination and denouncing of Gods Judgements against them: 1 More briefly, vers. 2, 3. 2 More amply and Rhetorically, vers. 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 27.

3 Here is a Catalogue of those enormities and crying sins which brought these Judgements upon them: As

1 *Unrighteousness*, vers. 7.

2 *Obstinacy and hating of Reproof*, vers. 10.

3 *Cruelty and Oppressing of the poor*, vers. 11.

4 *Bribery*

4 *Bribery*, vers. 12.

5. *Presumption and vain confidence, in their vocal and instrumental singing, in their sacrifices and hypocritical services, promising themselves safety and deliverance, though they lived in all manner of wickedness*, vers. 18, 21, 22, 23.

The summe of the Prophets Argument is this, *That people which is unrighteous, obstinate, cruel, hypocritical and Idolatrous, shall perish; But such are you, O ye house of Israel: Therefore yee shall perish.*

4 Here is an exhortation to Repentance, repeated again and again, to make the deeper impression upon their hearts, that so they might prevent the Judgements approaching, and this is done partly for the Elects sake that they might not perish with the wicked, and partly for the wickeds sake that they might bee left without excuse.

Here wee have the two parts of Repentance. 1 The *terminus à quo*, from what they must turn, *viz.* from Idols which cannot help in a day of wrath, vers. 5. and from the evil of sin, which brings with it the evil of punishment, vers. 14, 15.

2 The *terminus ad quem*, to whom they must return, *viz.* to God, which is oft repeated to shew the great necessity of it, vers. 4, 6, 8, 14, 15, 24. Seek yee the Lord, seek goodness, seek righteousness.

2 Here are Motives to inforce the duty. The first is a *drawing Motive* taken from the benefit which attends Repentance, *viz.* life and salvation, vers. 4. *Seek yee me, and yee shall live*, and with all the gracious favour and presence of God, vers. 14, 15.

The second is a *driving Motive*, drawn from the evil which will necessarily follow the neglect of it, God will bee to them a consuming fire, vers. 6. *Seek yee the Lord, lest hee break forth like fire in the house of* Joseph, *and devour it.*

A third Motive is drawn from Gods power, which is seen in the *works of Creation*. Hee maketh the seven Stars and Orion, vers. 8. 2 In his works of Providence, *He strengthneth the spoiled against the strong.*

VERSE

Verse 1.

Hear this word which I take up against you, even a Lamentation, O house of Israel.

IN this Chapter the Lord goes on with his charge against *Israel*, and the Prophet as his Atturney-general doth manage the charge against them. Hee opens the case, shews them their sins, and Gods Judgements coming on them for those sins; yet withall puts them in a way to prevent them, by perswading them to reform the things amiss amongst them.

In this first Verse the Prophet makes as it were an O yes, calling for silence and attention. *Hear yee this word which I take up against you.* Hee had called for audience twice before *Amos* 3.1.& 4.1.but this people had stopt their ears,and hardned their hearts, they were become Sermon-proof, and Judgement-proof, nothing could work upon them, yet the Prophet calls a third time, if by any means hee might work upon them.

This Verse is as it were the Preface to the Sermon,and is set in the front to quicken attention; where we have, 1 The matter to be attended, and that is the word of the Lord published by the Prophet *Amos*. *Hear this word which I take up against you*; or as it is in the Original, which I lift up against you, that is, which I utter against you by Gods command, more clearly, and more fully,with more spirit and life than formerly, so *Job* 21.2. *Nasa, sustulit, sumpsit.*

2 Here are the persons against whom this Sermon is intended, and that is the ten Tribes, here called, *The house of Israel*, *q.d.* I speak not against strangers, but against you, O house of *Israel*,and therefore it concerns you to attend.

3 Here is the nature of the Sermon, it is a *Lamentation*, or lamentable Prophesie of the utter destruction of *Israel*, *q.d.* *Both I and* Hosea, *and other Prophets have for a long time warned you of approaching judgements, but since you sleight our Threatnings, and give your selves to mirth and merriment, I will now take up a Lamentation for you, and will mourn for you that will not mourn for your selves.*

So that this Lamentation implies first; the deep sense and ap-

apprehension which the Prophet had of that misery which was coming upon *Israel* for their Idolatry, Incredulity, Security, and Impenitency. This was to him matter of bitter and great lamentation, as the word imports, *Ezek.* 2.10. and 19.1. *ult.* and such lamentation the Lord expects from his people, *Ezek.* 26.17. and 28.12. and 32.2. Thus *David* lamented for *Saul* and *Jonathan*, 2 Sam. 1.17.

Kinah significat lamentationem amarissimam. Tarnovius.

Threnodia seu carmen lugubre quo regni Israelitici interitus deploratur. Gualter.

Secondly, This Lamentation implies a sad song, a doleful ditty, a burdensome and lamentable Prophesie of dismal judgements against *Israel*; that which the Prophet calls a Lamentation here, is oft called a Burden, as *Isa.* 13.1. and 22.1. *Ezek.* 12.10. *Nahum* 1.1. *Hab.* 1.1. *Zach.* 9.1. *Mal.* 1.1.

Ego tollo super vos sermonem qui eos ad luctum & lamentum coget, etiamsi nunc sint præfracti contra Deum. Calvin. See Mr. *Trap* on Mal. 1.1.

q.d. You laugh at my Threatnings now, but you will finde them an heavy burden shortly, and that which will bring great lamentation with it.

Quest. *But why doth the Prophet lament for these impenitent sinners that would not lament for themselves? hee should rather have rejoyced in Gods just judgements on them, according to that,* Psal. 58.10. *The righteous shall rejoyce when hee seeth the vengeance.*

Answ. Wee must distinguish of sinners.

1 Some are within the pale of the Church, and are Gods people by profession, being in Covenant with him, having a remnant of elect ones mingled amongst them. Now Gods judgements either imminent or present on these, have been in all ages lamented by the Saints, they have alwayes been deeply affected with the misery of Sion, though their sins have brought it justly upon them, yea and the Lords own bowels do yern over them, even when in justice he cannot but punish them, *Hos.* 6.4. and 11.8. Besides we must lament the sins of these, even when wee adore Gods just judgements on them, and must denounce his threatnings against them with tears & lamentation.

2 Others are without the Church, and many within, that are malicious, implacable, incorrigible, and incurable enemies to God, his wayes, his worship, and his people; now in the destruction of such we may, and must rejoyce, we are commanded so to do, *Psal.* 58.10. *Prov.* 11.10. *Rev.* 18.20. and 19.1.2.

Caut. Not that wee may rejoyce in their destruction simply

simply as they bee our enemies, or as they be creatures, but as they are wicked, rebellious creatures, and implacable enemies to God and his wayes, so we may, yea and God himself doth rejoyce in their destruction, *Deut.28.63. Prov.1.26.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Ministers may sometimes preface as occasion requires*, so did *Paul*, Act.13.16. *Men of Israel hear, and yee that fear God, give audience.* But of this before on *Amos* 4.4.

2 Obs. *Ministers must not preach their own inventions, but what God commands them.* Hear the word which God commanded mee to deliver to you. But of this at large before on *Amos* 4.1.

3 *Ministers must preach Judgement as well as Mercy.* Law as well as Gospel, and Lamentation as well as Consolation. See *Amos* 6.1.

4 *Tis our duty to bee affected with the miseries of Gods people*, whether they be imminent or present; we must weep with them that weep; and as fellow members of the same mystical body, wee should have compassion one of another, *Rom.*12.15. 1 *Pet.*3.8. Especially this concerns Gods Ministers to commiserate the sad condition of Gods people, and to intercede for them at the Throne of Grace, *Jer.*9.1. and 18.20. *Joel* 2.17. So did *Moses* for *Israel*, *Exod.*32.31,32. and *Samuel* for *Saul*, 1 *Sam.*15. *vit. Jeremy* writ a whole book of Lamentations for *Jerusalem*, and Christ wept over it, *Luke* 19.41,42. Hence the Lord so oft commands the Prophets to take up a Lamentation for the Princes of *Israel*, Ezek.19.1. yea for *Tyre*, Ezek.27.2. and for *Egypt*, Ezek.32.2.16. and threatens such as neglected this duty, *Ezek.*13.5. and 22.30,31. How great then is the sin of those wicked men who mock at such as mourn for them, who hate those which help to keep off judgements from them, who seek the destruction of those which seek their salvation, and desire their death, who use all means to bring them to life; such horrid ingratitude shall not pass without some signal vengeance.

See more at large on *Amos* 6.6.

5 Obs. *Such as contemn Gods Judgements, shall at last lament their folly.*

These obdurate sinners scoft at the Prophets Threatnings, and

and asked, when will the day of the Lord come? why it shall come upon you in a day that you look not for it, and shall bee a lamentation and a burden that shall sinke you: Patience abused turns into fury, though God bear long, yet hee will not alwayes bear.

See my Com. on Hos. 13. 12.

VERSE 2.

The Virgin of Israel is fallen, shee shall no more rise, shee is forsaken upon her Land, there is none to raise her up.

IN the precedent Verse the Prophet tells us of a *Lamentation* given him by God to publish against *Israel*. In this Verse he comes to tell us exegetically what it is, *viz.* the fatal and final overthrow of the whole Kingdome of *Israel*, set forth in emphatical termes, and variety of words to assure this unbeleeving people of the certainty of those Judgements which they should shortly feel. In the words wee have the summe of this Funeral *Lamentation*, or *Samaria's Epitaph*; The *Virgin of Israel is fallen*. Where wee have,

1 A Judgement threatned, and that is a fall. *Israel* is fallen, *viz.* into the hands of the *Assyrians*.

2 Here are the *persons* upon whom this judgement shall fall, and that is *upon the Virgin of Israel*, or the ten Tribes.

3 Here is the certainty of it, *Is fallen*, that is, they shall as surely come down, as if they were this day in the dust.

Quest. *How is Israel called a Virgin, whereas shee had plaid the Harlot with Idols, and is therefore called an Harlot?* Hos. 1. 2.

Answ. Kingdomes and Cities are called *Virgins* in Scripture on several accounts: As 1 when they flourish in riches and renown, and remain unconquered, and unaccustomed to any yoke of servitude; now such in Scripture, though they bee Heathenish and Idolatrous, yet are called Virgins: As *Tyre*, Isa. 23. 12. *Babylon*, Isa. 47. 1. and *Ægypt*, Jer. 46. 11.

Virgo Israelis i. e. regnum Israel quod simile est pulchræ Virgini propter opes, & tranquillum statum, Piscator

2 In respect of their Effeminacy, Delicacy, and Wantonness, priding themselves in their Beauty and Bravery, and

and tricking themselves up like Virgins; and thus *Israel* was effeminate, living daintily and deliciously, giving themselves up to feasting, mirth, and musick, *Amos* 6. 4, 5, 6. priding themselves in their wealth, and ornaments, and in this respect they might be called Virgins.

Israel vocatur Virgo, non propter integritatem, sed propter ornatum & pulchritudinem. Estius in Loc. dissert.

3 In respect of their weakness, and unableness to help themselves; so *Israel* shall fall, and be like a poor, helpless, forlorn Virgin, that sits alone in distress without any helper; she shall now be deflowred, and wasted by the *Assyrian*.

4 *Israel* is here called a Virgin after her Apostacy, but this is in relation to former times, before they were Idolatrous, as in *Davids* time (before the division of the ten Tribes) when they served God in purity, without the mixture of humane inventions; and likewise in relation to their *duty*, shewing what they should have been, and not what now they were; and in this sense *Judah* is also called a Virgin after their Apostasie, *Jer.* 18. 13. & 31. 21. they had both the name of Virgins, but were indeed Idolaters, and by consequence Adulteresses, that broke the Covenant of their God.

5 The City of *Samaria* was a maiden City, it was never subdued or conquered by any Nation, before the *Assyrian* King *Salmanesser* brought it under the yoke of Servitude, and carried the ten Tribes captive into *Assyria* and *Media*; and in this respect it might be called a Virgin.

3 Here is the *certainty* of this Judgement set forth in the Present Tense, *The Virgin of* Israel *is fallen*; that is, shee shall as surely fall as if it were already done; and this is usuall with the Prophets, to signifie the certainty of a thing, by putting it in the Present, or preterit Tense. Thus the Scripture speaks of Eastern and Western *Babylon* in the Present Tense, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen*; that is, it shall suddenly, surely, and irrecoverably fall, *Isa.* 21. 9. *Jer.* 51. 8. *Rev.* 14. 8. & 18. 2. So *Jude* 14. *The Lord cometh*, that is, he will as surely come, as if he were now coming to Judgement. This was about forty years before the final overthrow of *Samaria*, that the Prophet fore-told this; yet since God had decreed their fall, he tells them, it shall as surely be effected as if it were done this day; and it is usual with all the Prophets to speak thus assertively, not only because of the certainty of what his denoun-

Preterita profuturis ponit ad majorem rei certitudinem. Mercer.

Cecidit, significat actum instantem & quasi inchoantem secundo cecidit, i. e. jam cadere incipit, ac brevi prono casu cadet Babylon. A Lapide.

denounced, but because from the first denunciation the plague begins, though not discerned, nor sometimes accomplisht till many years after.

4 Here is the aggravation of her fall;

1 She shall fall so that she shall never rise again.

2 She shall be forsaken in her own Land.

3 There shall be none to raise her up.

Many fall but they rise again, but when a Kingdome shall fall from its former splendor and dignity, and never be restored again, that is very sad; yet this was *Israels* case, they were carried Captive into *Assyria*, and the body of the Kingdome, and generality of the People never returned again; nor had they ever the face of a Kingdom more, 2 *King.* 17. *Hos.* 4. 5. & 5. 5. When the remainders of *Judah* returned out of the *Babylonish* Captivity to *Jerusalem*, some few of *Israel* joyned themselves with them, and are reckoned with *Judah*, the rest of the ten Tribes being scattered, and dispersed up and down the world, degenerated into *Gentiles*, and some of those dispersed were converted in the Apostolical times, as appears by the inscriptions of the Epistles of *James* and *Peter*.

Obj. *But we read in our Saviours time of the lost sheep of the house of* Israel, *Matth.* 10. 6. & 15. 24. *and that* Nicodemus *was a Master in* Israel, *Joh.* 3. 10. *and therefore some conclude, that the Kingdom of* Israel *was not totally ruined.*

Ans. The word *Israel* hath many significations in Scripture, but that in *Matthew* hath relation to the Kingdome of *Judah*, for in Christs time there was no other Kingdome of *Israel* extant but that, and that also was very low when Christ came, as I have shewed on *Amos* 9. 11. and by a Master in *Israel* is meant no more but a Teacher in the Church of God, for the Church is oft called Israel, *Psal.* 115. 12. *Galat.* 6. 16.

Obj. *It was fore-told, that the ten Tribes should be made one with* Judah, *and should returne with them*, Ezek. 37. 16, 17, 19, 22.

A. This is spoken of Gospel times, and implies a Spiritual, not a Corporal returning of a remnant of those despised and dispersed ones in the dayes of the Messiah, who should be united to *Judah*, and by the preaching of the Gospel be brought into the unity of the Church.

Shre

Shee is forsaken upon her Land.

Shee had forsaken God, and now all desert and forsake her; she had laid Piety and Justice in the dust, and now God resolves to lay her in the dust, she shall be smitten to the earth, and dasht against it by the *Assyrian* with such force, that like an earthen pot it shall never be sodred together again.

Nitteſta, derelicta, deſerta, abjecta, humi projecta.

And which greatly aggravates their misery, all this should happen to them in their own Land; they should want men to help them in their owne Land, as appears in the next verse. They should be afflicted and brought low, not in an enemies Country, but even in their owne; they should be slaughtered and enslaved in the sight of their owne Country, which had been like a Mother and Nurse unto them, and was dearly beloved of them. It aggravates a Virgins misery, to be slaine in the sight of her owne Mother.

There is none to raise her up.

God will not, and then Creatures cannot. Shee shall fall without any help or hope of restauration, no neighbour Nation shall once reach out an helping hand to raise her out of the dust, but there let her lye, like one that is felled to the ground, and not able to rise of himself, and forsaken of all others must needs remaine as he fell; so *Israel* should never recover his pristine splendor, and flourishing condition, though some remnants should remaine, or as it followes in the next verse.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Sin layes famous and flourishing Kingdoms in the dust.*

Those Maiden-Cities and Kingdoms which were never toucht, nor taken, yet if sin raign in them (as it did in *Samaria*) it will ruine them. Where are the *Babylonian*, *Persian*, *Grecian* Monarchies, which were sometimes famous and flourishing, and the terrour of the world? they are long since laid in the dust.

2 *Impenitent sinners shall certainly perish.*

Though they may flourish for a time, yet when their sin is ripe, they shall come down; and therefore the Prophet speaks in the Present Tense, *Israel is fallen*; that is, he shall as certainly fall as if he were down already. So *Babylon* that lives

in Luxury and security, shall at last be burnt, *Revelat.* 18. 7, 8, 9, 10.

3 *When God is against us, all forsake us.*

See Mr. Greenhil on Ezek. 9. 2. p. 211.

Israel is forsaken in his owne Land, and so sadly forsaken, that there is not one to raise him up. The Land did formerly abound with men, yet now they have none to help them in their misery; to the dust they must, and there they lye. As God will not cast away the righteous man, but will assist him in his troubles; so he will not take a wicked man by the hand, *Job* 8. 20. but as he brings them into trouble, so he leaves them there, *Ezek.* 22. 20. & 29. 5. his owne he will not leave, and if men will not succour them, yet he will, *Job* 5. 19. *Jer.* 30. 17. he will give his not only the grace, but also the blessing of peace, *Psal.* 29. 11. *Levit.* 26. 6. when our wayes please him, then all are at peace with us, *Prov.* 26. 7. 2 *Chro.* 30. 9.

4 *God oft retaliates sinners, and payes them in their owne coyn.*

Israel that forsook God, is now forsaken of all, and those that overthrew Justice, and oppreft the poor, are now overthrown themselves, and oppreft by others. But of this see *Amos* 6. ult. Obs. 8.

VERSE 3.

For thus saith the Lord God, the City that went out by a thousand shall leave an hundred, and that which went forth by an hundred, shall leave ten to the house of Israel.

WHat the Prophet had spoken before in general, now he comes to express more plainly and particularly, *viz.* That the Kingdome of *Israel* should perish; yet not so totally, but that a remnant should be spared; though the body of the people should be cut off, yet a decimation should live to praise God.

So that in this verse we have the reason of the Prophets lamentation and doleful ditty, and that is the great havock which God would make amongst this people; he would cut off nine parts, and leave but a tenth. When the *Romans* Armies did mutiny, the Commanders did use to decimate them, punishing

nishing every tenth man. But the Lord goes further here, being incensed against *Israel*, hee tells them, that by the Sword, by Captivity, by the Pestilence and Famine, hee would make such a slaughter amongst them, that the City which went out by a thousand, should bee brought to an hundred, and an hundred to ten; that is, of a great multitude very few should return. Such a woful decimation there should bee amongst them, that very few should escape. The like Threatning wee have set forth under another Metaphor, *Amos* 3. 12. *As the Shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the Lion, two legs, or the peece of an ear, so shall the children of* Israel *bee taken out of* Samaria, *&c. q.d.* as a Shepherd when a Lion hath been devouring his flock, findes some mangled remains of a leg, or an ear; so shall it bee with *Israel*, some one or two shall escape the general slaughter and Captivity.

The City that went out by a thousand; that is, The City which had a thousand Inhabitants passing to and fro through the gates thereof; or more genuinely, The City which sent forth a thousand able men to the Wars, or that could furnish, and set out a thousand men fit to bear Arms, shall have but an hundred left. The Prophet seems to allude to that of *Moses*, Deut. 1. 15. where the people are divided under Captains over thousands, and Captains over hundreds.

This Threatning was partly fulfilled in the three years siege of *Samaria*, 2 King. 18. 10. and partly after, when there was a great devastation of men amongst them.

Lastly, To assure them of the reality and truth of all that hee had spoken; hee brings in the Lord asserting it, *Thus saith the Lord God, q.d.* You have not to do with impotent men, but with an Omnipotent God, who both can and will execute his judgements upon the heads of the wicked.

The summe of all is this, *So few shall bee left alive after the long and hard sieges of the Assyrians, that in those Cities of* Israel *out of which a thousand able men had went to go forth to War, now there should be left but an hundred, and an hundred shall be brought to ten, saith the Lord who doth this.*

OBSERVATIONS.

Sin is the grand depopulator of a Kingdome. It makes Cities

that go out by thousands to return by hundreds, and reduceth their hundreds to tens. Wee use to complain of such as unpeople Towns and Villages; sin is the Arch-depopulator of Towns and Cities, it brings the Sword, Plague and Famine upon Nations, which sweep men away by thousands. As obedience multiplies a people, and makes them like the sand of the Sea for multitude, 1 *King.* 4. 20. So disobedience makes men few in number, which were before as the Stars of heaven for multitude, *Deut.* 28. 62. We should therefore unanimously rise in arms against this Cut-throat sin; if an enemy should come to Town that had killed our fathers, mothers, wives and children, and robbed us of all our pleasant things, with what indignation and fury would men, women and children joynely rise to ruine such an enemy? Sin is this adversary, it robs Sovereigns of their subjects, Pastors of their people, and robs us of our dearest relations. We should therefore do by it as the *Jews* did by *Paul* (whom they lookt upon as their adversary, *Act.* 22. 27, 28.) *when they saw him, they stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, saying, Men of Israel help, This is he that is against this people, and against the Law, and against this place.* So should we encourage each other against sin, and suppress it, saying, Magistrates, Ministers, men and brethren help, this is that which destroyes our people, wastes our Cities, unpeoples our Towns, opposeth the Laws, and brings confusion every where.

2 Obs. *In the midst of judgement, God remembers mercy.* All had deserved death here, yet such is his clemency that hee spares a Tenth, and leaves a remnant, *Isa.* 1. 9. and 6. 11, 12, 13. 'Tis the Lords singular mercy that any remain alive, and it is his overflowing goodness that wee are not all utterly consumed, and hurled out of the world at once, *Lam.* 3. 22. In the midst of these devastations, here is a gleaning left to praise him.

3 Obs. *The Warnings of Gods Ministers are Gods threatnings.* This saith the Lord, the City that went out by a thousand, shall leave an hundred. 'Tis not I (saith *Amos*) but the Lord by me his weak instrument, that tells you this. Wee are Ambassadors for Christ, 2 *Cor.* 5. Now the words of an Ambassador are esteemed as the words of him that sent him. This made *Cornelius* (though a Souldier and a Commander) yet to set himself as in Gods presence, and so to hear as if God himself spake to him, *Act.* 10. 33. and so did the *Thessalonians*,

1 Thess. 2. 13. when our preaching agrees with the word of God, it is to bee esteemed as the word of God himself. If this were truly beleeved, it would make us come with other affections to hear the word than most now do.

Verse 4.

For thus saith the Lord unto the house of Israel, seek yee mee, and yee shall live.

THe Prophet having shewed this people their misery, and affrighted them with the Threatnings, hee comes now unto the *Remedy*, and shews them how they may prevent all that misery which like a flood was rushing in upon them, especially for their Idolatry, and that is by Repentance, by forsaking their Idols, and turning to the Lord. Where there is no ground of hope, people grow desperate and run from God, and therefore the Prophet gives them some glimpse of mercy, inviting them once and again to seek the Lord, that so they might prevent his fury.

In the words we have 1 A preface, *Thus saith the Lord.* This is oft used before by this our Prophet, in the first, second, third, and fourth Chapters: and this hee doth, 1 To quicken attention; 2 To make them attend with the greater reverence and feare, since it is the word of God, and not of man; 3 To assure them of the certainty and truth of what hee spake, and that it should bee certainly and suddenly effected, for hee than is Almighty hath said it. See more in D. Benefield on Amos 1. 3, 6.

2 Here are the persons to whom hee speaks, *viz. To the house of Israel, i.e.* to the ten Tribes. The invitation is general, to take off all excuse, that none might say, They were not exhorted to the duty.

3 Here is a Precept, *Seek yee mee.*

Where wee have { 1 The Act, *Seek.*
2 The Object, *Mee.*

4 A Promise, *And yee shall live.*

The Precept is short, but very comprehensive. It is indeed a brief of the whole body of Religion, or a summary of the whole duty of man. The Scripture doth in many places epitomize our duties, reducing them sometimes to eleven heads, as

as *Psal.* 15. Sometimes to six, as *Isa.* 33. 15. and *Heb.* 6. 1, 2. Sometimes to three, *viz.* Justice, Mercy, and humble walking with God. *Micah* 6. 8. Our Saviour hath epitomized them, and reduced them all unto two; *viz.* *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thy self.* But our Prophet here comes and summes them all up in one, saying, *Seek the Lord.*

Tis not *Bakash*, *voluit petiit*, but *Parash*, *accuratè, diligentissimè, & summâ curâ quærere.*

The word *Seek* is emphatical, and signifies not a bare wishing or wouldingⁿ or some cold velleities, but an earnest, accurate, exquisite inquiring after God, and his wayes; and therefore the Septuagint render it by a compound word which signifies to seek out with earnestness and diligence till wee finde the Lord. The Apostle useth the same word, *Heb.* 11. 6. *The Lord is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

Tis not ζητήσατε, *quærite*, but ἐκζητήσατε, *diligenter inquirite.*

The word implies labour, industry, and constancy, wee must never rest till wee have found the Lord, as the woman that had lost her groat, continued seeking till shee had found it, *Luke* 15. 8.

Chi, ideo, quocirca.

3 Here is the causative particle, *For*, which may bee rendred, *therefore*, and then the sense will bee more current, thus, *q. d. Since the Lord hath threatned to make such havock amongst you, therefore seek him sincerely that yee may live; for hee desires not your ruine, but your returning.*

Yet some make the particle redundant here, and look upon it onely as an expletive particle, oft so used by the *Hebrews.* The sense is here entire without it.

4 Here is the object of our seeking, and that is *God*, *Seek yee mee*, Excellent things are the object of our desires; now there is none like God, and therefore none to bee desired like him. Hee is our Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, ours in all sweet Relations, our Father, Husband, Lord, King, &c. and therefore to bee sought and served by us in an especial manner. One of these obligations call for observance and duty, but when all shall concencer, and meet in one, how great should our observance bee?

2 This seeking of God implies a sincere turning to him, a loving him with all our heart, a seeking him simply for himself, it notes a trusting in him, a fear to offend him, a forsaking of all Idols and false wayes (as it follows in the next verse) delighting only in his pure word and worship, 1 *Chron.* 16. 10.

and

and praying to him, *Psal.* 34. 4. *Matth.* 7. 7. It implies also an obeying his Commands, 2 *Chron.* 14. 4. and seeking his face and favour at all times, *Psal.* 27. 10. *Isa.* 55. 6. These are those things above, which we are commanded to seek, *Colos.* 3. 1.

Thus we see, what a Magazine of matter is comprehended in this little Precept, *Seek yee me.*

V. Gerhard. Loc. com. de lib. arbitr. Tom. 2. §. 73. mihi. p. 225. edit. ult.

Obj. *This command to seek God (say Papists and Arminians) implyes, that we have Free-will of our selves to seek him, and turn to him, else why doth the Lord command us so to doe, if we had no power to doe it?*

Ans. It doth not follow, that because the Lord commands us to seek him, therefore we have power of our selves to doe it. For,

1 These commands shew us our duty, but not our ability; they shew what we ought to be, but not what we are.

2 Yet these Exhortations are not in vain, for the Lord makes them effectual in the hearts of his people; what he bids them doe, he enables them in some measure to doe.

3 The Lord had a remnant of his Elect mingled amongst this heap of chaff, and their wills being changed, and made conformable to Gods will, are willing and ready to seek and serve him.

See more in my Beauty of Holiness, p. 6, 7, &c

4 Hereby the wicked are made more inexcusable, and their malice and obstinacy made more apparent to the world, since they stand out against so many invitations to come in.

[Against Free-will, see *Davenants* Determ. Q. 9. p. 45. D. *Sibbs, Concio ad clerum*, p. 69. *Laurent.* in Apoc. 2. 5. p. 125. *Camero Theses de Grat. & Lib. arb.* p. 273. *ad* 296. *Pareus contra Bellar.* Tom. 1. *Totaliter. Alting, Loc. com.* P. 2. p. 460. & *Hornbec. contra Socin. l.* 3. *c.* 5. *p.* 611. *Brochmand Cas. Cons. de homine primo, cap.* 1. *p.* 134. *folio. Walaus Loc. com. P.* 1. *p.* 16. *&* p. 437. Mr. *Burgess* against *Orig. sin. l.* 2. *ch.* 4. *p.* 289. *Rolloc* in Rom. 8. p. 152, &c. Dr. *Arrowsmith* on John 1. 13. p. 189. & 198, Mr. *Case* Morn. Lect. *quarto*, p. 207.]

5 Here is a promise to incourage them to seek the Lord, drawn *ab utili*, from the benefit they should reap thereby, *Yee shall live*, or live yee; the Imperative Mood is put for the Fu-

ture tense, by an usual Hebraism, *Prov.* 3. 4. & 4. 4. to shew the certainty of a thing, as here, Seek the Lord and live; that is, yee shall certainly live.

You shall have a { Natural / Spiritual / Eternal } Life.

1. If you seek the Lord, and return to him, you shall have your *Natural life* prolonged; whereas you are in danger of dying by the hand of the *Assyrian*, yet doe but return to me unfeignedly, and you shall experimentally find that your lives shall be given you for a prey; at least yee shall not be utterly destroyed, but instead of Warre, you shall have peace and prosperity in your borders. This seems to be the most genuine sense of this place. (though we may not exclude the other, for it is a known Rule, that *it is safe taking the words in the largest sense*, if neither matter, phrase, nor scope hinder.) for in the fore-going verse, the Lord tells them what slaughter he would make amongst them, therefore he bids them here, returne and live.

Sub nomine vitæ Hebræi omnem hominis felicitatem complecti solent. Gualter.

Yet we may not solely confine it to a Natural life, because it is a Legal promise, and they usually doe comprehend Spiritual mercies in them. The Hebrews frequently under the name of *Life*, doe comprehend all manner of prosperity and felicity, both Temporal, Spiritual, and Eternal, *Deut.* 4. 1. & 5. *ult. Psal.* 34. 12. & 133. 8. *Prov.* 4. 4. *Ezek.* 18. 9. The like expression we use at this day, at the Inauguration of Kings, when we cry, *Vivat Rex*, let the King live; that is, all health, prosperity, and happiness attend him.

2. You shall live *a spiritual life* of Grace here, your souls shall enjoy communion with God, they shall live to him here, and at last shall live with him for ever; for Grace is the suburbs of glory.

3. You shall *live eternally*, Ezek. 18. 17. ult.

Obj. *But had not the Lord decreed the destruction of this people, how then doth he bid them return and live?*

A. Such threatnings of Temporal Judgements are not alwayes absolute, but conditional, *viz.* if they repent not, I will destroy them; and though this condition be not alwayes expreſt, yet it is understood, as appears by that notable place,

Jer.

Jer. 18. 7, 8, 9, 10. so that when people repent of their sin, God will repent of the punishment, and stay the execution of the sentence which he had denounced against them, as he did by the *Ninivites*. The change is in us, and not in God.

Deus novit mutare sententiam, si nos noverimus mutare mores. Aug.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Such as seek God rightly, shall live assuredly.*

I say, such as seek God rightly, which cuts off many pretenders to religion, who seem to seek and serve the Lord, but it is feignedly, and hypocritically; they halt between God and *Baal*, between Christ and Belial; like *Agrippa*, they are almost, but not altogether Christians; they have a name to live, but they are dead indeed.

2 Others seek for the living amongst the dead. They seek the Lord amongst the traditions and customs of men. Such mens religion is vain, *Mat.* 15. 9. *Amos* 5. 5.

3 Others seek, but it is too late; like *Esau*, that never cries till he had lost the Blessing. So those, *Luke* 13. 24, 25.

4 Others instead of seeking the Lord, sit all the day *idle*, they forget the Lord days without number, he is not in any of their thoughts, *Jer.* 2. 32. It is not the somnolent, but the violent that get heaven, *Mat.* 11. 12. where then will those Idle, Atheistical *Seekers* of our time appear, who are meer Scepticks in religion, that question every thing, but beleeve and practice nothing? some of them have been Professors this forty years, yet now they are to seek their religion. These men have laid good foundations the while, that are going out of the world, before they know how to live in the world; when the Lord hath so clearly shewed us what he requires of us, *Micah* 6. 8. what madness is it to be still running after New Lights, which are no Lights for directions?

Against these see Mr. *Geneſpies* Miscel. ch. 10. p. 1.

5 Others instead of seeking God, they persecute those that doe sincerely seek him, like the Scribes and Pharisees, that would neither follow Christ themselves, nor suffer others so to doe. Stripes are prepared for scorners, and such mockers shall have their bonds made strong, *Isa.* 28. 22.

6 Others seek, but it is amiss; for they seek riches, honour, pleasures, instead of God, and things above. Those three are the Worlds Trinity, they are the grand ζητούμενα of our times.

David tells us, there be many of this stamp, *Psal.* 4. 6. *Many say, who will shew us goods?* *Paul* goes further, and tells us, *All* men seek their owne ease, wealth, ends, and respects; that is, *All comparatively*, they are but few that seek the things of Christ, *Phil.* 2. 21.

Q. *Since there are so many Seekers, and so few good ones, how must I seek aright?*

A. That you may seek the Lord and find him, you must seek him,

1 Early.
2 Sincerely.
3 Zealously.
4 Sensibly.
5 Constantly.
6 Regularly.

1 Those that will find the Lord when they seek him, must seek him *early*, in the morning of their youth, whilst the day of their Visitation lasts. To such the Promise runs, *Prov.* 8. 17. *They that seek me early shall find me.* It was *Josiahs* commendation, that when he was young, and but sixteen years old, he began to seek and serve the Lord, 2 *Chron.* 34. 1, 3. and *Timothy* knew the Scriptures from a Childe, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15.

See eight Reasons for this in Mr. *Gataker* Ser. on Mat. 6. 33. p. 43. folio. and Mr. *Burgess*, Spi. Refinings. Ser. 75. p. 453.

We must also seek him *orderly*, seek his Kingdome in the first place, both before, and above all other things, *Math.* 6. 33.

2 *Sincerely and cordially*, not hollowly and complementally. We must seek him with all our might, to such the Promises run, that they shall find him, *Deut.* 4. 29. 2 *Chro.* 15. 15. *Jer.* 29. 13. *Then shall yee seek me and find me, when yee shall search for me with all your heart.* Thus *David* sought him, and found him, *Psa.* 119. 10. never any mist that ever sought him in truth, *Psal.* 145. 18. If we be the genuine Seed of plaine, sincere *Jacob*, we shall never seek his face in vain, *Isa.* 45. 19. before they call, he will answer such, and will run to meet them, as he did the Prodigal, *Isa.* 65. 24. *Luke* 15. 18, 19, 20.

Yea, a wicked *Ahab* shall not altogether seek to God in vain; and if the shadow can doe so much, what will the substance and real seeking of God doe?

3 We

3 We must seek him *zealously*, and *earnestly*; *Magna magno*, such great things must be sought with fervent affections, *Deut.* 15. 5. sleighty seeking loseth all. Precious things are not easily attained. Even the worlds wealth comes not with a wish, much less heavenly treasures. They that will have them must *ask*, and if that will not doe they must *seek*, if seeking will not doe they must be more importunate, and *knock*; it is not a bare Repetition, but a *Gradation*, Mat. 7. 7. wee must seek as men doe for silver, and gold, with utmost diligence, *Prov.* 2. 4. let not the children of this world be wiser, and more industrious for their trash, than we for true treasure. Remember, that none shall be rewarded fully, but such as seek him *diligently*, Heb. 11. 6.

Pulsandi Metaphora ardor & zelus notatur, cum obstacula omnia assiduitate precandi perrumpimus. Cartwr. Harm.

4 *Sensibly*. See how we are undone without him, though we were Lords of all the world, yet without the favour of God, who is Lord of all, we are nothing. Sense of our wants will sharpen our desires after him, and make us resolve with *David*, to give no rest to our eyes, nor slumber to our eye-lids till wee have found him, *Psal.* 132. 4.

5 *Constantly*. 1 Chron. 16. 11. We must never rest till wee have found him, persevere in the use of all good means, as Prayer, Meditation, &c. resolve to take no denial, importunity will doe much. Comfort will come in the end, and will abundantly recompence all our waiting, Though hope deferred may make the heart sick, yet when it comes it will be as a tree of life, *Prov.* 13. 12.

6 *Regularly*. We must inquire for the good old way of Purity and Peace and walk therein, *Jer.* 6. 16. we must not walk according to the superstitious Customs and Canons of men, but according to the Canon of Gods VVord. *Galat.* 6. 16.

Q. *But what benefit shall I have by seeking God?*

A. Thou shalt have *Life*, and that is a very powerful motive; life is so sweet and desirable a thing, that the Devil could say, *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life*, Job 2. 4.

Now Piety hath the promise. 1. Of *Life Temporal*, so farre as shall be good for the righteous, *Psal.* 34. 12. & 37. 3. *Prov.* 3. 17. & 22. 4.

See my Beauty of Holiness, ch. 7. obj. 4.

2 You shall have *Spiritual life*, Isa. 55. 3. Ezek. 16. 6.

See the excellency of this spiritual life in Mr. *Lawrence* his Life of faith, p. 7. &c. and Mr. *Obad. Sedgwick* on Isa. 55. 3. ch. 13. p. 489.

which is indeed the onely excellent, sweet, and durable life. Natural life is common, every wicked man lives it, and it is imbittered with many crosses, and it is but [illegible]; it is a vapour that suddenly vanisheth, but this spiritual life is a special, comfortable, endless life, death it self cannot extinguish it.

3 If this bee not enough, you shall have *Eternal life*, Joh. 3. 16. and 6. 51. and 17. 3.

VERSE 5.

But seek not Bethel, *nor enter into* Gilgal, *and pass not to* Beersheba, *for* Gilgal *shall surely go into Captivity, and* Bethel *shall come to nought.*

TRue Repentance consists of two parts, 1 There is *terminus à quo*, from what wee must turn: 2 *Terminus ad quem*, to whom wee must turn. In the foregoing verse, the Prophet sets down positively and affirmatively whom wee must seek, and to whom wee must turn, and that is *to the Lord*. Hee comes now to shew us negatively, what wee must not do, and what wee must not seek, and that is *Idols*. Seek the Lord, but seek not Idols. God puts a But and Block in their way to keep them from them. *But seek not Bethel*. God can do all things, but Idols can do nothing; great reason then wee should forsake them, and cleave onely to God, who would have us first Table-men to worship him according to his own will revealed in his word; and then second Table-men, in righteousness towards our neighbour, vers. 15.

In the words wee have 1 A Dehortation from Idolatry, to this end they must

shun { *Bethel*, *Gilgal*, and *Beersheba*. } Three places infected with Idolatry.

1 That *Bethel* and *Gilgal* were such, I have shewed before at large on *Amos* 4. 4. *Bethel* was the place where *Jeroboam* set up a golden Calf.

Gilgal was a City full of Idols, *Hos.* 4. 15. and 12. 11.

Beersheba was a City in *Canaan* where *Abraham* had formerly dwelt, *Gen.* 21. 31, 32, 33. here God appeared to *Isaac*, Gen.

Gen.26.24. and here *Jacob* sacrificed, *Gen.*46.1. This made these superstitious people think that there was more holinesse in this place than in other, and therefore hither they came, when God had ordained them to go to *Jerusalem*.

This City was afterwards allotted to the Tribe of *Judah*, *Josh.*15.28. and 1 *King.*19.8. yet it was inhabited by the Tribe of *Simeon*, Josh.19.2. It was scituate on the utmost South-border of the Land of *Canaan*, as *Dan* was on the North. It was a City given to Idolatry, as *Bethel* and *Gilgal* were, and therefore the Lord giveth a strict injunction here, that they should not go to any of them.

See more on Amos 8.*ult.*

But seek not Bethel, &c.

q.d. If you will bee my people, you must cast away your Idols, you must not go to worship the golden Calf at Bethel, *nor to the High-places and Idolatrous Altars at* Gilgal *and* Beersheba, *for these places shall perish with the Idols that are in them.*

Pass not to Beersheba.

The Kingdome of *Israel* was divided from the Kingdome of *Judah*, yet so mad were this people on Idols, that they will post over the Country of *Judah* after them, when they had too many at home already.

2 To strengthen the Dehortation, here is a reason added, drawn from the danger which would follow if they followed Idols, both they and their Idols should perish. *For* Gilgal *shall surely go into Captivity*; that is, the Inhabitants of *Gilgal* (*Metonymia subjecti*) going they shall go, *i.e.* they shall suddenly and certainly go into Captivity by the hand of the *Assyrian*. There is an elegant Paranomasy in the words. *Gilgal* signifies rowling, *Gilgal* shall rowl to ruine; or rowling hee shall speeddily rowl into Captivity. They trusted in this place for safety, but both they and it should perish.

Gilgal, Galo, jigleh, migratio, migrando, migrabitur, vel volvendo volvetur. See more in my Schools-Guard, on the figure Paranomasia.

And Bethel *shall come to nought.*

Bethel signifies the house of God, but by reason of its Idolatry, tis called *Beth-aven*, *Hos.*4.15. a house of vanity and iniquity, *Hos.*5.8. and 10.5.

Aven signifies an Idol, vanity, inanity, and nought, and therefore the ruine of *Bethel* is set forth by this Title. *Bethel* shall be *Aven*, or bee brought to nought; that is, it shall bee totally ruined, and nothing shall remain of it, but the prints of Gods indignation against it.

Aven, mendacium vanitas, inanitas.

So

So that it is great folly for any to run to such Idolatrous places for shelter, which can neither defend themselves from ruine, nor their Idols from spoyl, *Hos.* 10.5,6.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Idolatrous places must bee shunned.* As they might not go to *Bethel*, *Gilgal*, or *Beersheba*, so wee may not go to *Spain*, *Italy*, *France*, *&c.* with the least hankering after their Idols, if you do Satan will quickly make a prey of you; for sin, especially the sin of Idolatry, is like Bird-lime, if a man go once to touch it, hee will bee so intangled in it, that hee cannot easily be shut of it. Hence it is that the Lord so oft commands us to shun wicked society for fear of infection, as I have shewed at large elsewhere.

In my Com. on 2 Tim. 3.5. p. 138. &c.

How great then is the sin of those, that do spontaneously *travel* into Idolatrous Countries needlesly? such oft-times return infected both in body and soul. *Jeroboam* that travelled into *Egypt*, brought home the Idolatry of *Egypt* with him, with which hee infected all *Israel*.

Against such, see B. *Halls Quo vadis?* p. 639. folio.

2 Obs. *True converts must forsake Idols.* They must say, with repenting *Ephraim*, *What have I to do any more with Idols?* Hos. 14.8. Many would fain serve the Lord and their Idols too, but that will not be, if you will bee mine, you must renounce your Idols, saith God, *You must forget your kindred, and your fathers house*, Psal. 45.10. that is, wee must abandon all those corruptions which wee are strongly inclined unto by nature; and those Idolatrous, and superstitious practises, which wee were brought up in; wee must renounce them all, and give up our selves intirely to Christ our spiritual Husband, then, and not till then will hee take pleasure in us, and desire our beauty. Such as desire to have communion with God, must first put away their Idols, *Gen.* 35.1,2. *Josh.* 24.22,23. *Judg.* 10.16. 1 *Sam.* 7.3. *Psal.* 16.4,5. True converts turn from those vanities to the living God, *Act.* 14.15. and have a special command given them to *keep themselves pure from Idols*, 1 Joh. 5.21. They know that the Lord is a jealous God, and cannot endure corrivals, nor to have his worship mixt with the inventions and fancies of men. As I have shewed at large before

fore on *Amos* 4.4. God cannot abide halting and halving between two opinions, 1 *King.* 18. 21. if we will Worship God, we must abhor Idols, for we cannot serve both, *Josh.* 24. 14, 15. No man can serve two such contrary Masters, that have contrary commands, wayes, and ends. There can be no communion between Christ and Belial, 2 *Corinth.* 6. 15. and therefore they that will goe to * Mass with their bodies, pretending that they keep their hearts for God, are meer dissemblers. They partake with Idolaters in their sin, harden them in their Idolatry, and sin against the Prophets counsel here, that forbids men to goe after Idols.

Multi sunt hodie mediatores, qui dum vident non posse improbari nostram doctrinam, vellent aliquid medium fingere, i.e. vellent reconciliare Papatum cum doctrinâ Evangelii, & Propheta ostendit talem mixturam non posse ferri à Deo. Calvin in locum. * Against going to Mass, see *Willets* Synopsis Controversi. 13. p. 698. D. *Geo. Abbots* Thesis, Quæs. 4. p. 139. *Perkins* Cas. Conse. p. 89. B. *Halls* Cas. Conse. Dec. 3. cas. 13. p. 183. Edit. ult.

3 Obs. *Superstition is a toylsome thing.*

It makes men that they cannot rest, but they must run up and down, now to *Bethel*, anon to *Gilgal*, and then traverse the Country, and goe a Perigrination to *Beersheba*; so mad are men upon Idols, that they are not content with those at home, but they must be gadding abroad after more. Thus the Papists at this day, though they have Idols more than a good many at home, yet must goe a Perigrination after more; and here see the perverse nature of man, how directly opposite it is to God, he bids us goe one way, and we goe quite another. He bids us goe to *Jerusalem*, and they goe one to *Dan*, another to *Bethel*, another to *Gilgal*, and a fourth to *Beersheba*. So true is that, *Homo est inversus decalogus*, Man is a perverse, cross-grained-peece to all Gods holy commands.

See more on *Amos* 8. ult. Obs. 5. & Mr. *Greenhil* on *Ezek.* 20. 27. Obs. 4. p. 87, 88.

4 Obs. *Idolatry brings desolation and ruine upon Cities and Kingdoms.*

Gilgal shall goe into Captivity, and *Bethel* shall come to nought, and the Virgin of *Israel* shall fall. When *Bethel* Gods House, shall become *Beth-aven*, a house of Idols and Vanity, then follows *Beth-any*, an house of misery and affliction. They that follow such lying vanities forsake their owne mercies. Idols themselves are most vain, Vanity, and things of nought. and nothing doe they bring but nought with them. Hence the Scripture calls them, *Elilim*, things of nought, *Levit.* 19. 4. 1 *Chron.* 16. 26. *Psal.* 96. 5.

2 *Gnatsabim*, Sorrows, because they bring men to sorrow, captivity, and misery, 1 *Sam.* 31. 9. *Psal.* 16. 4. & 115. 4.

3 *Gillulim*, filthy dung and excrements, because they are loathsome to God, *Levit.* 26. 30. *Deut.* 29. 17. *Ezek.* 6. 4. 5, 6.

4 *Shiccutsim*, detestable, loathsome abominations, *Ezek.* 7. 20. & 11. 21. & 20. 8. *Jer.* 32. 34.

5 *Seguirim*, Devils; such as worship Idols, are said not to Worship God, but Devils. They forsake the Lord and his Worship, to worship Devils, *Levit.* 17. 7. *Deut.* 32. 17. 2 *Chron.* 11. 15. 1 *Cor.* 10, 20, 21. *Rev.* 9. 20.

Great reason then that we should abominate Idols, which bring such sorrow and misery upon places, incensing the Lord to set fire upon them, as it follows in the next verse.

Verse 6.

Seek the Lord and yee shall live, lest he break forth like fire in the house of Joseph, *and devour it, and there be none to quench it in* Bethel.

GOod things are hardly beleeved, and slowly practised, and therefore the Prophet here renewes his Exhortation of seeking God by true Repentance, and that he might the better prevail with them, he useth a double Motive.

The first is drawn from the danger which would ensue if they refused; the Wrath of God would break forth upon them like a consuming fire, so that all their superstitious Sacrifices at *Bethel* should not be able to quench it.

The second is drawn from the glorious and tremendous Majesty of God, with whom they had to doe; and this is accurately set forth, vers. 8, 9.

In this Verse we have a Repetition of the fore-going Exhortation to seek the Lord, that they might live, q. d. *If ever you desire to be truly happy, you must forsake your Idols, and false-worship, devoting your selves wholly unto God.*

2. Here is a Reason to inforce the duey, *Lest the Wrath of the Lord break out like fire in the house of* Joseph, *and devour it, and there be none to quench it in* Bethel.

Here the Holy Ghost seems to prevent an evasion, the *Israelites*

raelites might say, If the Lord be thus angry with us, we wil goe to our Gods at *Bethel*, and they shall succour and shelter us. Nay, saith the Lord, you doe but make lyes your refuge when you goe thither for ayd, for none of your Idols shall be able to quench the fire of my wrath, no not in *Bethel*.

By *Fire* here is meant the VVrath of God, which should break forth like fire, in sudden, terrible, and irresistible Judgments, devouring all before it, so that none should be able to quench it; so much the word in the Original imports. It is *Ignis*, i. e. *Jacobus D. i manus. Mercer.* *Tsalach, perrumpere, pervadere, feliciter pertransire superatis omnibus impedimentis. Rivet in* Isa. 53. 10. ised for the carrying on of a thing against all difficulty, or a successful breaking through in despight of all opposition. All the world compared with God is but as so much dry stubble, or a few dry thorns before a consuming fire, *Exod.* 15. 7. *Isa.* 47. 4. & 47. 14.

Fire is taken two wayes in Scripture, 1 Literally

1 Literally, and strictly, for the Element of Fire, or for ordinary fire.

2 Figuratively, and Metaphorically, for the VVrath of God, or any effects of his wrath, any Judgement which hee sends upon the wicked, be it Sword, Plague, Famine, or whatever distress; yea the very Floud which drowned the world may in this sense be called *Fire*. Thus it is usually put in Scripture for all manner of dreadful Judgements; as *Psal.* 18. 7, 8. *Isa.* 66. 15. *Jer.* 49. 27. *Amos* 1. 4. from this fire of Gods wrath comes fire from Heaven and consumes the wicked, *Gen.* 19. 24. *Exod.* 9. 24. *Levit.* 10. 2. *Numb.* 11. 2. 1 *King.* 1. 10. and at last they must lye in unquenchable fire, *Isa.* 30. 33. *Mat.* 3. 12. & 25. 41.

In the house of Joseph; that is, amongst the *Israelites*, or ten Tribes, who are oft called *Jacob*, *Joseph*, *Ephraim*, *Samaria*. By *Joseph* here is meant *Ephraim*, for *Joseph* is oft put for *Ephraim* his Son, *Amos* 6. 6. *Revel.* 7. 8. and *Ephraim* is oft put for the ten Tribes, because *Jeroboam* the first King of *Israel* (after the division of the ten Tribes) was of the Tribe of *Ephraim*, 1 King. 11. 6.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *So great is the patience and clemency of the Lord, that he is very loath to destroy men.*

See M. *Burgeſs* ſpi. Refining, 1 P. Serm. 66. p. 403. *Greenhils* Ser. on Rev. 22. 17. p. 145. *Reymers* Precepts for Practice, p. 41, 42.

Hence it is that he ſends his Miniſters, riſing early, and coming late unto them, exhorting them again and again to ſeek him, and turn to him, that they may live and not dye. See verſ. 4, 5, 6, 14, 15.

2 Obſ. *The Wrath of the Lord is exceeding terrible.*

Hence it is compared to *fire*, which is the moſt terrible, tormenting, and affrighting Element.

Queſt. *But how is anger ſaid to be in God, when he is impaſſible?*

Anſ. Anger and VVrath are aſcribed to God improperly, and Metaphorically, by an Anthropopathy; not as a perturbation, and trouble of mind, as it is in us; but as an act of revenging Juſtice, which Juſtice as it ſimply burns againſt ſin, is called anger, but when it doth more fiercely wax hot againſt ſin, and Sinners, it is called Wrath and Indignation, *Iſa.* 64. 5.

This Wrath of God is,
1 Formidable.
2 Durable.
3 Inevitable.
4 Irreſiſtible.
5 Unexpreſſible.

1 It is *formidable and terrible*; Fire of all Creatures is the moſt dreadful. Hence the doleful Torments of Hell are ſet forth by fire, *Mat.* 3. 12. and Gods Wrath is called, *a conſuming fire*, Deut. 4. 24. which burns up all that ſtands in its way. This made him caſt out Angels, hurl out *Adam*, drown the old world, fire *Sodome*, root out the *Canaanites*, Lev. 18. 25. and deſtroy *Jeruſalem*. As all in God is infinite, his Mercy, Juſtice, &c. ſo is his Wrath, which makes it ſo exceeding terrible and intolerable. Should all the Creatures ſen to their help, yet they were not able to uphold a man under the burden of Gods wrath.

See D. *Preſton* on Rom. 1. 18. p. 114, &c.

Hence the deareſt of Gods Servants (though they have had Gods Spirit to uphold them) yet have cryed out of this, as a burden too heavie for them to bear; and have choſen rather to endure any tortures, than to lye under the wrath of an angry God. They fear not him who can but kill the body, but they ſay with the Prophet, *Pſal.* 76. 7. *Thou, even thou art to be feared, and who may ſtand before thee when thou art angry?*

Gods

Gods wrath is like a great Bell, it is long in raising, but when it is up, it makes a hideous noyse. Or like Lead, which is cold of it self, but when once melted, nothing scalds more terribly. What calmer and smoother than the Sea; yet when stirred what more tempestuous?

2 It is *Durable*. It is not for a day or two, but it is an *abiding wrath*, Joh. 3.36. it is a fire that never goes out, but shall abide on the bodies and souls of the Reprobates to all eternity, *Matth.* 18.8. and 25.41.

3 It is *inevitable*, there is no flying from it, *Amos* 9.1, 2. if a King bee angry with us, we may flye out of his Dominions, but if the King of Kings bee against us there is no flying out of his Territories.

4 It is *irresistible*, it is like a violent wind, or a mighty flood, which carrieth down all before it, *Psal.* 90.7, 8, 9. Should all the world rise in opposition against God, they would bee no more before the fire of his wrath, than a little dry stubble, or a few crackling thorns. Wood is longer in burning, and leaves some coals behinde, but stubble and thorns are suddenly and utterly consumed, and scarce any ashes left, *Exod.* 15.7. *Isa.* 5.24. and 9.18. and 47.14. Fire and water have no mercy, there is no intreating them; such is Gods wrath in reference to the wicked, as good speak to the fire not to burn, or the water not to drown, as to the wrath of God not to consume wicked men; it must and will burn them, and none shall quench it, *Deut.* 29.20. Though *Moses* and *Samuel* stood before the Lord to intreat, yet the sentence cannot be reversed, wrath must devour and consume the wicked, *Jer.* 15.1. Though prayer hath in many cases quenched wrath, yet sometimes the wrath of God cannot bee quenched by prayer, nor intreated down, there is no speaking to it.

5 It is *unexpressible*. It is infinite, and so beyond the tongues expression, or the hearts imagination. Hence *Moses* asks, *Who knows the power of thy wrath?* Psal. 90.11. It surpasseth our knowledge. Wee may over-fear the wrath of men, but wee cannot have too dreadful apprehensions of the wrath of God. All other fire is but like painted or imaginary fire compared with this. Hence the Holy Ghost is fain to use metaphors and allusions to set it forth to us. Sometimes comparing it to *fire* which is a most furious element, laying all waste

See more in Mr. *Leighs* Body of Divinity, l. 2. c. 9. and Mr. *Jenkin* on *Jude* v. 7. Obs. 5, 6.

waste before it, *Nahum* 1.5,6. Sometimes to *water*, and to a mighty flood which swiftly and irresistibly carries down all before it, *Job* 22.16. *Isa.* 8.7. and 59.19.

Sometimes to a *Moth*, which secretly and insensibly mars thread by thread till the whole peece bee consumed, *Job* 13. *ult.* *Psal.* 39.12. *Hos.* 5.12. Sometimes to the Wrath of a *King*, and if that bee as the Messenger of death, Oh what is the wrath of the King of Kings? *Prov.* 16.14.

1 Then take heed of provoking him to anger; better have all the world inraged against us, then God against us. Their wrath is but finite and limited, both in respect of time and place, but Gods wrath is infinite without either bank or bottome.

Take heed of all sin, especially of those God-provoking sins, as

1 *Idolatry*, Deut. 4.23,24. and 32.21,22. 1 Cor. 10.5,7. and following Antichrist, *Rev.* 14.9,10. and 19.20.

2 *Prophanation of holy things*, Lev. 10.2. Numb. 16.35.

3 *Neglecting to reform the things amiss in Gods worship*, Ezra 7.23.

4 *Fornication and Sodomitical sins*, Gen. 19.24. 1 Cor. 10.5,8.

5 *Murmuring at Gods dispensations*, 1 Cor. 10.5,10.

6 *Apostacy and back sliding*, Heb. 10.38.

2 When ever we perceive the fire of Gods wrath to break out in Sword, Plague, &c. by our prayers and tears we should labour suddenly to quench it, *Numb.* 16.46. A fire the longer it burns, the more dreadful it is, and the harder it is to quench it.

3 In all our approaches to this great and mighty God, whether in Prayer, Sabbaths, Sacraments, &c. come with the greatest fear and reverence, for hee is a consuming fire, *Heb.* 12.28. This holy fear must bee an ingredient into all our services, *Psal.* 2.11. It is said of *Luther* that hee prayed with such fear and reverence, as remembring hee had to do with God, and yet with such assurance and confidence, as with a Friend, and Father.

Tantâ reverentiâ aliquid petit ut cum Deo; tantâ fiduciâ ac spe ut cum patre & amico se loqui sentiat. Mel. Adams in vita Luth.

4 Bee *thankful for Christ*, who hath delivered us from wrath to come. The Angels fell and lye under this wrath, but Christ was cursed that wee might bee blessed, and hath undergone Gods wrath for us, that wee might bee freed from it.

In

In time of tentation, set this as a skreen between the fire of Gods wrath, and thy soul. Hide thy selfe in the clefts of this Rock, and get thy soul covered with thy Saviours Righteousness, and then thou mayest stand with comfort and confidence before this consuming fire.

Vers. 7.

Yee who turn Judgement into wormwood, and leave off Righteousness in the earth.

THe Prophet having called on *Israel* to repent, hee comes now to set before them their sins which they should repent of. Hee had called upon them before to forsake their Idolatry and sins against the first Table, vers. 5. now he calls on them to repent of their sins against the second Table, *viz.* their *perverting of Judgement and Justice, their cruelty, and oppressing of the poor*, verse 11. and their *Bribery*, verse 12.

Seek yee the Lord, yee who have turned Judgement into wormwood.

1 Here is a sin reproved, and that is perverting of Judgement, set forth by an elegant Metaphor and Allusion of turning Judgement into wormwood.

2 Here is an exegesis or fuller explication of this sin, *They leave off righteousness in the earth.* It is usual in Scripture to make the latter clause explain the former.

3 Here are the *persons* which are guilty of this sin, and those are the Princes, Judges, and Rulers of *Israel*, included in the Pronoun *Yee*.

4 Here is their duty set down in the next verse, They must turn from their sin, and seek the Lord who is the great Creator and Governour of all:

q.d. O yee Rulers of Israel, *who have not onely provoked mee by your Idolatry, but have also cast away all care of Righteousness and Equity, and given your selves up to all manner of cruelty, bribery, rapine, and iniquity, and have thereby turned the sweetest Justice into the bitterest wormwood; now repent, and seek the Lord, that yee may live for ever.*

The Prophet here principally taxeth the great ones, and the Rulers of the people, who had the deepest share in this guilt; they should have been patterns of Justice and Righteousness

to

to their inferiours; but they being evil themselves, corrupted the rest, as bad humours use to flow from the head to the body, and therefore the Prophet falls heavy upon them, as hee did before, Chap. 4. 1.

These corrupted Justice, and made that which is in it self most profitable and pleasant, to become bitter and distasteful by oppressing the poor and helpless. This is called *Wormwood* here; and gall and poyson, *Amos* 6. 12.

1 Because such unrighteousness and oppression is very displeasing and bitter to God.

2 It is bitter to the poor and *oppressed*.

3 In the end it will bee bitter to the *Oppressors* themselves. This is *finis operis*, though not *finis operantis*. In the conclusion it will bee gall and wormwood, yea deadly poyson to their souls, though they intend it not.

Justice and Equity is a most sweet and precious thing, and doth wonderfully help to preserve the peace and prosperity of a Land. This is a sanctuary and shelter for the innocent and the oppressed; but these oppressing, self-seeking Rulers had made a poyson of a remedy, and turned that which was ordained for the safety of the afflicted, to his ruine. These Rulers had turned Justice into wormwood many wayes.

1 By Bribery, *Amos* 4. 1.

2 By Partiality, justifying the wicked rich man, favouring the kinsman, the friend, the briber; but condemning the poor and innocent, who had no bribes to give them.

3 By delayes tyring out the poor, and so forcing him to give up his cause.

4 By wresting and perverting the Law to their own ends, contrary to the genuine sense of it.

5 By hindring such evidence as might clear the cause.

And leave off righteousness in the earth.

See my Com. on *Psa.* 82. 4. p. 101, 113, 114, &c. and p. 200, 201.

They let it lye in the dust, and trod it under foot. That which was their duty, yea their glory, *viz.* the execution of Justice, that they neglected and sleighted as a most contemptible thing: They abused the righteous, and did grinde the faces of the poor, *Amos* 8. 4, 5, 6. There was no place left for any righteousness amongst them; their seats of justice, were places of injustice; and their Courts of equity, Courts of iniquity.

OBSER-

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Perverting of Justice is very bitter, and displeasing to God and man.*

Look how distastful Gall and Wormwood is to us, so distastful is unrighteousness to the righteous God; It is as poyson and hemlock to him, *Amos*, 6. 12.

Hence he so oft complains of it, and denounceth so many woes against it, as in *Psalm* 82. 2, 3. and in *Isa.* 5. 7, 20, 23. & 10. 1. & 59. 4, 13. and *Lam.* 3. 35, 36. As nothing is more sweet and delightful than an impartial administration of Justice, so nothing is more bitter and displeasing to God and man than unrighteousness. It is a sin to omit righteousness, but it is a farre greater aggravation of the sin to contemn it, and trample it under foot, as these did here. Great is the number of wicked men, and were it not for Justice that did restraine them, every mans lust would be a law, and the reins would be let loose to all manner of villany; so that it would be safer living amongst so many wilde Beasts, than amongst men. Justice is Rulers duty, security, and glory, as I have shewed at large on *Psalm* 82. 4. p. 35, 36, 111, 139.

See more in my Com. on Psal. 82. 2. Obs. 5. p. 100. and Mr. *Patricks* Jewish Hyp. ch. 9. p. 112.

VERSE 8.

Seek him that maketh the seven Starres and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night, that calleth for the waters of the Seas, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth, the Lord is his name.

THis rustick plain Prophet begins here to raise his stile. The better to awaken these sensual and secure sinners, he sets before them the dreadful & glorious Majesty of that God with whom they had to doe, *q. d.* you have not to doe with a dead, and impotent Idol, that will be pleased with dead and dull services, and pacified with childish toyes and trifles; but you have to doe with the living and Omnipotent God, who is the Creator and Governour of all things, who appoints the vicissitudes

ſitudes of Day and Night, of Summer and Winter; who numbers the Starres of Heaven, and calls them all by their names; who waters the earth with rain, and ſtrengthens the weak againſt the ſtrong, and makes the ſpoyled victorious over the ſpoyler. It was the great ſtudy of the Prophets, and ſpecially of this our Prophet, to ſet forth the Lord in his Majeſty and Glory, that they might the better work upon their Hearers. See *Amos* 4. 13. & 6. 14. & 9. 6.

In this Verſe we have a magnificent deſcription of Gods Omnipotency, he is,

The Creator of the Starres,
The Diſpoſer of the Times,
The Former of the Clouds, and
The Orderer of Warres;

And therefore the Prophet calls upon them yet once more, to ſeek this Great, Almighty One. This off preſſing of this duty notes the neceſſity, Excellency, and difficulty of it. It is not ſo eaſie a matter to repent as many imagine, the heart of man is exceeding hard, and his eares are ſtope againſt Gods counſels, ſo that the Lord is forced to call again, and again, for audience and admittance.

Seek yee him.

These words are not in the Original, but are neceſſarily underſtood, and to be ſupplied from Verſ. 4, 6.

Who maketh the ſeven Starres, and Orion,

The Prophet begins firſt with the Stars, becauſe the Majeſty, Power, and Wiſdome of God is wonderfully ſeen in their motion, order, multitude, and magnitude. Under theſe two Conſtellations all the reſt of the Starres are comprehended, by a Synecdoche of the part for the whole, for he that made one made all, and the leaſt are ordered by him as wel as the greateſt. But becauſe theſe two were moſt eminent and obvious, and commonly known, therefore he chiefly inſtanceth in theſe two; they are mentioned only three times in Scripture, viz. *Job* 9. 9. & 38. 31. and in the Text.

The Pleiades or ſeven Starres, and Orion, are oppoſite one to another.

1. They have contrary ſituations, Orion dwells in the Eaſt, and Pleiades in the Weſt.

2. They

2. They appear in contrary seasons, *Pleiades* ariseth about *March*, and brings in the Spring; but *Orion* appears about *November*, and brings in Winter; so that when hee saith, *Seek the Lord who made Pleiades and Orion*, it is as if hee had said in plain English, *Seek him who makes Summer and Winter.*

3. They have different *Influences*.

1. *Pleiades* is a Constellation usually called the seven Stars; They arise in our Hemisphere about the Spring, and are therefore called *Vergiliæ, quasi veris virgiles*. Hence wee read in *Job* 38.31. *Pleiadum deliciæ*, the sweet influences of the *Pleiades*, because they bring in the sweet and pleasant Spring with them, when they appear, the trees and plants begin to flourish. These *Pleiades* have their name from sayling, because after the cold and stormy Winter is past, Saylers begin to put to Sea. These Chimah or seven Stars appear in a cluster about the midst of heaven, they are commonly known by Shepherds and Rusticks. *Amos* being an Herdsman had taken notice of them.

πλεῖν, ἀπὸ τοῦ πλεῖν à navigando.

Orion is a Constellation of Stars that produceth cold, when it appears then Winter comes. It ariseth in our Hemisphere about *November*. As the *Pleiades* do loose the earth and set it at liberty that it may bring forth delightful fruit; so *Orion* by his frosty bands is said to binde up the earth, *Job* 38.31. and bring in variety and change of weather, with many storms and tempests: Hence the word *Chesil*, as it signifies a fool, and one who is unconstant, now of one minde, and anon of another; so this Star is called by this name by reason of the unconstancy and mutability of weather which it brings with it.

Orion circa Novembrem exoriens, cœlum & terram variè tempestatibus turbat, Mercer.

Seek ye him who turns the shadow of death into the morning.

These words are taken by some literally, and by others metaphorically, I shall take in both, though the literal bee most genuine; *q. d.* It is this great and mighty Lord who makes great changes in the Air, and wonderful alterations in States and Kingdomes. It is hee that turns the grossest darknes into the brightest day, and the lowest adversity into the highest prosperity; and on the contrary, hee can (when pleaseth him) turn our day into night, our light into darknes, and our mirth into mourning.

See more in Amos 8.9.

Tsalmavet umbra mortis, i.e. maxima & densissima tenebra, quæ timorem mortis incutere possunt.

By the shadow of death, here is meant great, gross, horrible, and terrible darkness, such as is the very image of death. Any darkness is sad, but darkness, and the shadow of death is the height of sadness. Such deadly darkness *Job* wisheth to the day of his birth, *Job* 3.4,5. and *David* put the worst of his case, and the best of his faith, when hee said, *Though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear none evil*, Psal. 23.4. that is, in the greatest of evils, I will fear none evil. In the very danger of dangers, in exceeding great dangers, hee would comfort himself in his God. It may also signifie *symbolically and metaphorically* great dangers, and deep distress.

And maketh the day dark with night.

The vicissitudes of day and night are not casual, but providential. It is the Lord who is the great disposer and dispenser of time, that by his Almighty power hath appointed the day to succeed the night, and the night the day, which no gods nor Idols can do.

Who calleth for the waters of the Sea [by vapours and clouds] *and powreth them out upon the face of the earth* [by showers of rain.]

Hee calls for the waters of the Sea *viz.* beyond its ordinary bounds, that it may overflow the earth with inundations, &c some.

But more genuinely thus, It is the Lord that appoints and orders the waters (as by express command) to rise up from the Seas, and turn into rain, which afterwards hee powres forth upon the earth. The Sun draws up vapours out of the Sea, which are condensed in the middle region of the air into rain, and then fall down upon the earth. These waters which come salt and bitter from the Sea, and so in all probability should make things barren, yet are so strained and purified by the Almighty hand of God, that they become sweet and fruitful.

See more on *Amos* 9.6.

Est ipsum esse, tum suum formale, tum causale rerum omnium, qui est Oceanus essendi, & immensum pelagus existendi, à Lapide.

Quest. *But, who is it that doth all these wonderful things?*

Answ. Why it is Jehovah, *The Lord is his name*, hee is no dead Idol, as *Baalim* the god of the *Sidonians*, or *Moloch* the god of the *Ammonites*; but hee is Jehovah who hath his being in himself, and who gives life and breath and being to all creatures; from him, by him, and in him are all things, and

therefore hee will not bee deluded with your superstitious foperies.

The summe of all is this, *Seek yee him who hath formed and framed the heavens, and all the Stars therein, who turneth the blackest night into a clear morning, and causeth the brightest day to end in a dark night, who waters the earth with rain, the Lord is his name who doth this.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *It is lawful for a Minister to press the same truths again and again upon his people.* Thrice in this Chapter doth the Prophet call on *Israel* to seek the Lord. Thrice in one Psalm is Gods Almighty power repeated, that the Church might triumph in it, *Psal.*46.1,7,11. Christ presseth that Precept, *Hee that hath an ear to hear let him hear*, again and again, Rev. 2.11. *Paul* oft put his hearers in minde of what hee had delivered to them, *Rom.*15.14,15. So *Peter* put his hearers in remembrance of the same things, 2 *Pet.*1.12,13. *Yea so long as I live I will put you alwayes in remembrance.* This is profitable and safe for our people, *Phil.*3.1. *To write the same things to me is not grievous, but for you it is safe.* *Abundans cautela non nocet.* This is a means to help the memory, wee are naturally forgetful of the best things, and therefore had need to have line upon line, and precept upon precept, *Isa.*28.10,13. especially fundamental, practical precepts, such as Faith, Repentance, Obedience, Death, Judgement, &c. should oft bee prest. When the *Gentiles* heard *Paul* preach Christ, they desired to hear the same things again the next Sabbath day, *Act.*13.42.

See Mr. *Robinson* on *Ephes.* 6.12.p. 3,4.

This helps to strengthen our graces, to quicken us to our duties; as the sounding of the Trumpet quickens the spirit of a valiant Souldier, and it confirms us in the truth of the things delivered; as the doubling of *Pharaohs* dreams assured him of the certainty of the thing.

Cant. Yet a Minister must not preach the same things out of idleness, spending all the week in an Alehouse, or in some secular affairs, and then come with a *crambe recocta*, some crude, idle, addle, undigested stuffe, Cursed are such as do this work of the Lord negligently. An idle Minister is the

worst than in a Parish, for whereas an idle Artificer hurts but his Family, an idle Minister hurts a whole Congregation.

But when wee repeat and inculcate things out of conscience, and for the good of our people, this is commendable. Besides, there is no Minister that is studious, but if hee do come to press the same point again, hee hath some new arguments or enlargements; for Divinity is such a depth, that wee are alwayes learning, and may finde out somewhat which wee knew not before.

Bee not then offended when you hear necessary truths oft prest, this is safe for us, and good for you. Many have itching ears, they must have *novum, aut nihil*, they are all for novelty, they cannot endure wholesome, plain preaching; whereas wee have but two things to preach, *credenda & agenda*, faith and good works.

2 Obs. *The names which are commonly given to Stars may bee used by us.*

Chimeah, and *Kesil*, *Pleiades* and *Orion* were names given to those Stars by men, and yet the Holy Ghost useth them here, and speaks with the vulgar in their own language. So it useth Heathenish names in the New Testament, *Act.* 28.11. Wee read of a Ship in which *Paul* sayled, called *Castor* and *Pollux*, two Pagan-sea-gods. So for dayes and months wee may call them by such names as are best known to the people with whom wee live. If wee live amongst a people that usually say the first, second, third month or day, wee must say so too. But if wee live in a land where they say *January*, *February*, *March* &c. *Monday*, *Tuesday* &c. wee must say so too, else how shall wee understand one another? Thus the *Jews* called their months sometimes by *Caldean* names, as *Nisan*, *Adar*, *Cislew*, and *Tammuz*, from the Idolatrous feasts of *Tammuz*, which they celebrated yearly in the fourth month, *Ezek.* 8.14. wee may as well say *Lammas*, as the *Jews* say *Tammuz*.

3 It is true, *David* sayes, hee will not once make mention of Idol gods, *Psal.* 16.4 but that was by way of adoration and reverence, or to swear by them, but in a civil respect to distinguish dayes, and to make known our mindes to those that wee speak to; thus the Prophets themselves have used them.

Obs. The Lord is the maker of the Stars.

Hee that made these two Constellations, made all the rest, for under these two the rest are comprehended, *Job* 9.9. It is hee, and hee onely that hath garnished the heavens with Sun, Moon, and Stars, *Job* 26.13. Much of Gods Power and Wisdome is seen in the Stars of heaven, every flower of the field sets forth his praise, but these declare his glory in a more eminent manner, *Psal.* 19.1. and therefore the Lord calls upon his people in the Text to seek and serve him, why so? for it is hee that made *Pleiades* and *Orion*, *i.e.* hee made all the glittering stars; and if the floor of heaven bee so admirable, what is the inside?

Stellæ sunt Luna famulæ, notis oculis, militia cœli.

Wee should therefore dayly admire and praise him, who hath made the Sun to rule the day, and the Moon and Stars to rule the night, for his mercy endures for ever, *Psal.* 136. 7,8,9.

Much of God is seen in the { *Multitude*, *Magnitude*, *Motion*, and *Influence* } of the Stars.

1 For *Multitude*, they are for number numberless, none but God that made them can number them, *Psa.* 147.4. *He tells the number of the Stars, and calls them all by their names*, hee knows them as exactly and particularly as we know those men, whom wee can presently upon sight call by their names. Men can reckon some, and count to about a thousand three hundred, but hee calls them all by their names.

2 Their *Magnitude*, such great bodies shew the greatness of that God which made them. Most men look upon the Stars as some small lights, like the blaze of a candle, but when it shall bee made appear by reason that one Star is bigger than the whole earth, it may well move admiration in us.

3 *Their swift and regular motion.* That these mighty bodies should bee carried about the world every day, and more exactly in order, not one of them out of course, though they have shone above five thousand years, yet still they continue their former vigour and brightness. The fixed Stars keep their own Orbs constantly; so should wee bee constant in Gods way,

way, and not bee like Planets or wandring Stars, carried to and fro with every wind of doctrine, *Jude* 13.

4 They have great *Influence* upon the creature, though not so great as judicial Astrologers would make the world beleeve.

4 Obs. *Rain is the gift of God.*

It is hee that calls for the waters of the Sea (by whose vapours the clouds and rain are made) and poureth them out upon the earth, *Job* 5.10. But of this at large on *Amos* 4.7. and 9.6.

5 Obs. *That second causes must lead us to the first cause of all.*

The Prophet here describing the Physical original of the rain, and shewing that the waters of the Sea were the *material cause* of it, and the Sun the instrumental cause to draw up those vapours, yet hee tells us that God is the efficient cause of all, it is hee that calls for the waters of the Sea, and unless hee move, the other can do nothing, *Nil si prima vetat, causa secunda valet.* Many talk of nature, and study nature so long till they forget the God of nature, and pore so much upon the creature, that they forget their Creator.

6 *The consideration of Gods Omnipotency should humble us.*

This is the reason why the Prophet so much insists on this point, *Amos* 4.*ult.* and 9.6.

Verse 9.

That strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong, so that the spoyled shall come against the Fortress.

THe Prophet having set forth Gods Omnipotency in the works of Creation, comes now to clear it further by his works of Gubernation and Providence, hee can with ease strengthen the weak and destroy the strong; there is nothing too hard for him.

In this verse wee have a Prolepsis, or preventing of an objection, whereas the *Israelites* might say, Wee dwell in *Samaria*, a strong fortified City that hath stood it out many a time successfully against its enemies, wee have likewise a potent and successful King, *Jeroboam* the second, and therefore it is not for us to fear.

To

To this the Prophet answers, that they had no reason to trust in these creature-confidences, for the Lord could easily raise up the *Assyrian* who should spoil both them, and their Kingdome.

Object. *If hee do come, wee will flye to our strong Holds and Fortresses.*

Answ. And *I will send the Destroyer* (saith the Lord) *against the Fortress.* There is no power nor policy against the Lord, all Forts and Fortifications are but vain if hee be our enemy. God can send mighty Adversaries against us who shall destroy our Forts, and us in them.

In the words wee have 1 A Position or Proposition. *God strengtheneth the spoyled against the strong.*

2. An Inference, *Therefore the spoyled shall come against the Fortress, and take it.* The vulgar Latine, and all the Popish gang, that leave the Original, and follow the Latine Translation, render it *subridet vastatorem*, God laughs at the destruction of wicked men. But the word signifies to corroborate and strengthen, and not to laugh or smile.

Hammablig, confortans, corroborans, from *Balag, roboravit, confortavit.*

Others conceive, that the Lord here threatens that if they did not seek him, but would trust in their strength, and creature-confidences, and still went on to contemn his warnings, he would send some weak, spoyled, contemptible enemy, and strengthen him with the spoyl which hee should get, so that hee should destroy them, for hee gives victory to whom hee pleaseth, and can make the weak to prevail against the mighty; and therefore *Israel* ought to stand in awe of him, and sue unto him for mercy. This way the *Chaldee* Paraphrase goes.

Qui vires augeat infirmis contra fortes, & direptoribus super propugnacula fortissimorum imperium donat Chald. Paraph.

But the Original favours the *Geneva* Translation, which runs thus, *Hee strengtheneth the destroyer against the mighty, and the destroyer shall come against the Fortress.*

The original word *Shod* which our Translation renders spoyled, is usually rendred a Destroyer, a Waster, a Spoyler, a Plunderer, *Isa.* 16.4. *Let mine out-casts dwell with thee Moab, be thou a covert to them from (Shod) the spoyler, for the Extortioner is at an end, the spoyler ceaseth,* and substantively it is put for devastation, waste, and spoyl, *Isa.* 22.4. and 59.7. *Hos.* 7.13. So that wee may take the words either *generally*, that the Lord is hee that strengtheneth the Destroyer against

Shod, vastator, devastator, rapina.

Gaal gnaz, super robustum fortem, valentem.

against the Mighty, when they sin against him, and provoke him.

Or *particularly*, as spoken to *Israel*, it is the Lord that strengthens the *Assyrian* (who is called the Spoyler by way of eminency) against these Idolatrous *Israelites* who thought themselves strong and mighty.

And the Lord will bring him against the Fortress: that is, against the fortified City of *Samaria*, and the other Cities and Towns depending on it, *Isa.*17.3.

q.d. You think your selves safe and well, because you are armed and fortified, and therefore you sleight my Threatnings, and promise your selves peace, and think that none shall bring you down, not once considering that you have to do with God, and not with man, who can strengthen the weak against the strong, and hath many Destroyers at hand ready to execute his vengeance upon a rebellious people.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 If wee take the words according to our Translation, the Observation is, *That God can strengthen the weak, and make them overcome the strong.* It is hee that strengthens one, and enfeebles another, *Ezek.*30.24. and can make wounded men to subdue his enemies, *Jer.*37.10. He can make one *Abraham* with his family to conquer four Kings, *Gen* 14.9.18. he can make a *Joshua* to slay *Amalekites*, destroy *Midianites*, and subdue *Canaanites*, Num.31.7. We should not then kiss our own hands, or sacrifice to our own nets, but ascribe the praise of all our victories to the Lord, who strengthens the wasted and the spoyled against the spoyler, and can make *Jacob* a worm to thresh mighty Mountains, *Isa.*41.14,15. so *Josh.*6.5,15. 1 *Cor.* 2.27. *Jer.*31.22.

2 *No Forts, nor Fortifications can preserve a sinful people from destruction.*

In my Com. on Hos.13.16. Obs.7.p.71.

Though they should build walls as high as heaven, and dig ditches as deep as hell, yet if sin bee within, all Fortifications without are vain; as I have shewed at large elsewhere.

VERSE

Verse 10.

They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly.

THere are two great impediments that keep men from Repentance. The one is a low conceit of God; The other is an high conceit of themselves. The first the Prophet removed Verse 8.9. by setting before them the glorious Majesty of God. The second hee comes to remove in this and the following verses, by setting before them their sin and misery, that so (if possible) hee might fit them for mercy.

In this Verse wee have a second sin and cause of *Israels* ruine, and that is obstinacy and hating of reproof. This was their sinning sin which helpt to ruine them with a witness; the Lord in great mercy sent Physicians to them, but they abused them, and like frantick Patients threw the physick to the walls, they hated to bee reformed, and cast Gods words behinde them.

The words admit of some difficulty. The question is, *Of whom doth the Prophet here complain, whether of the Rulers, or of the people?*

Answ. Of both. 1 Of the people, *They hate him that reproveth in the gate*; that is, they hate the Judges who executed judgement in the gate; they hate him who thus censureth and judgeth them for their sin; for there is a double reproof, 1 *A civil reproof* given by the Magistrate, his just sentence upon the wicked is a real reproof of his wickedness, and that Magistrate which faithfully and impartially thus reproves men in the gate, must look to bee hated by the wicked of the world, so was *Job* that renowned Magistrate, *Job* 30.1,10.

2 And most genuinely, it is taken for *spiritual reproof*, by the Prophets who were wont to reprove open sins openly: *They hate him that reproves in the gate*, that is, in the publick and open Assemblies; for the gates of the City were places where usually was much concourse of people, *Prov.* [illegible]. and 8.3. There the Judges kept their Courts of Judicature, and erected their seats of Judgement for the administration of Justice, and determining of causes, as appeareth, *Gen.* 34.20.

34.20. *Deut.* 21.19. and 22.15. *Ruth* 4.1. *Job* 5.4. and 29.7. *Psal.* 127. *ult.* They had Justice in the gates.

1. For the ease and convenience of the Citizens, that they might follow their suits without impediment to their other affairs.

2 That Country-men might have justice easily and freely before they entred the City.

3 That the Judges might take heed of doing unjustly, since they had so many to see and hear what they did.

4 To shew the equality and indifferency of Justice from which none were excluded, but as the gates of the City were open to all, to go in and out at pleasure, so should the Courts of Justice.

5. To intimate that the chiefest strength of Cities, and safety of States doth consist in the due execution of Justice, which is as gates and bars against sin and wickedness. Take away this, and gates of brass cannot preserve a City from destruction.

Here sometimes the Prophets did preach Gods word, and publish their Prophesies to the people, either in the gates of the Temple, as *Jer.* 7.2. or in the Gates of the City, as *Jer.* 17.19,20. and 19.2. and 22.2. and 26.10.

2 Here is an Aggravation of their sin, *They abhor him that speaketh uprightly*, or that speaketh what is sincere and right; that is in plain English, they abominate that man, and abhor that Minister that faithfully declares the counsel of God unto them without halting or halving, and this is made a Periphrasis of a faithful Minister, hee is one that doth not blend, nor mix the word of God, but hee delivers his will plainly and sincerely to his people. They hated the *Judge*, but they abhorred the *Minister*; now abhorrency is the height of hatred.

Integrum abominantur verbum.

Senes & judices loco Dei positos, ad judicandum sedentes, oderant, non ferentes eorum correptiones. Pari insaniâ perfectè loquentem, i.e. veros Prophetas qui solum & perfectissimum Dei sermonem annunciabant. Mercer.

The people could not bear the censures of their Rulers, but neither Princes nor people could indure the plain and powerful reproofs of the Prophets; and therefore the Prophet here chargeth the Judges, and the great ones more especially (as appears by the context, verse 7.11,12,15.) for hating

ring the Prophets which reproved them in the gates. These great ones had acted their unjustice openly in the gate, and for any one to bee so bold as to come there and reprove their unrighteousness, they could not bear it.

Ut hoc extrema corruptionis argumentum, quando illic, loci correptio nulla admittitur, ubi disciplina publica maximè regnare debet. Gualter.

Great men love to live as they list, they love not bands of restraint, they must do what please themselves with a *non-obstante*, without controle. Though they do unjustly, yet none must tell them of it, for they have eyes, but they neither can nor will see, they have ears, but they will not hear, for their hearts are hardened to their own destruction, *Isa.6 9,10.*

Videmus, & reges, & quicunque in mundo potestate aliqua præditi sunt, velint esse sacro-sancti, nec ullam admittant reprehensionem. Calvin.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Open sinners must bee openly reproved.*

Those that sin before all, must bee reproved before all, that others may fear, 1 *Tim.*5.20. These Judges who acted unrighteously in the gate, must bee reproved by the Prophets in the gate.

See my Com. on 2 *Tim* 4.10. p.421.

2 Obs. *It is a sad aggravation of mens sins to hate those whom God hath authorised and commissioned to reprove them for their sins.* To lay snares for him that reproveth in the gates, *Isa.* 29.21. To devise devices against plain-dealing *Jeremies*, and with *Ahab* to hate Gods faithful *Micaiahs*, and to seek their death and destruction, who labour to bring us to life and salvation, is the height of wickedness, *Gen.*19.9. 1 *King.* 22.24,26. *Jer.*38.6. *Matth.*14.3. *Act.*7.54. and 9.29.

Truth breeds hatred, and light is irksome to the sore eyes of wicked men. They draw the Curtains, and cannot endure the light that reproves them; and it is worth observing that the viler men have been, the more they have hated plain reproofes, as the *Sodomites*, *Pharaoh*, *Ahab*, *Herod*, *&c.* they were all reprehension-proof. But the better men have been, the more submissive to reproofs, as *David*, when *Abigail* stopt him on one hand, and *Nathan* on the other, hee blesseth the one, and loves the other. So *Hezekiah* when the Prophet *Isaiah* told him that hee must lose all, hee receives it meekly, with a *Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken*, Isa.

Amant lucem splendentem, non redarguentem.

39 ult. So *Constantine* and *Theodosius*, how tractable and submissive were they to the Ministers of Christ, when the *Roman Cesars* (most of them) persecuted to the death such as opposed them in their Tyrannical practises, they were punished as seditious and troublers of the State, that did in the least trouble them for their sins.

See *Hildersham* on Psal. 51. Lect. 9. p. 52. &c.

And this is the great sin of *England*, and bodes some judgement approaching, that we cannot endure a plain-sound-soul-searching-Ministery: wee must have smoothe things, or nothing, *Isa.* 30. 10. The Idolater must not be told of his Idols, the superstitious man of his ceremoniousness, nor the incontinent man of his *Herodias*, &c. Men love such as will daub over their vices, and give them such service or starvis as will not bite them, *Missa non mordet*. It is observed that the *French* Reformed Churches some years before that bloody massacre, did affect a frothy, flashy kinde of preaching, not regarding that which touched the conscience. Whether this be not our case, let the Reader judge.

VERSE 11.

Forasmuch therefore as your treading is upon the poor, and yee take from him burdens of wheat, yee have built houses of hewn stone, but yee shall not dwell in them, yee have planted pleasant Vineyards, but yee shall not drink of them.

WEe are now come to a third sin, for which the Prophet reproves this people, and that is for *Oppressing the poor*, and this was more peculiarly the sin of their Rulers and Grandees. They that should have been the keepers of the Law, they were the greatest breakers of it; they that should have been the Vindicators, they were the Violators of it. The Prophet therefore strikes not at the foot, *viz.* the common-people; but he strikes at the head, from whence all disorder descended unto the body.

In this Verse we have { 1 Their Sin, 2 Their Punishment.

1 Their

1 Their sin was Oppression, { 1 They trod upon the poor, 2 They took away his corn.

2 In the Punishment we have, { 1 Their Projects; 2 The frustration of those Projects.

Their Projects were { 1 Building of fine houses, 2 Planting of Vineyards.

Their frustration follows, { 1 They shall not dwell in the one, 2 They shall not drink of the other.

Your treading is upon the poor; that is, upon the afflicted, and godly poor especially, *Amos* 2.7,8. where the hedge is lowest, there these beasts get over, *Amos* 4.1. These they tread upon in a most contemptible manner, as the dirt and mire in the streets; grinding them with cruel impositions, and oppressing them with grievous vexations, keeping them under in extream slavery, and laying them as low as the dust; now to lye in the dust implies a very low, base, and despicable condition, 1 *King*.16.2. *Job* 16.15.

The word in the Original signifies *properly* to despise or trample under feet by way of contempt, *Isa*.14.25. and 18.2. and 63.18. But *Metaphorically* it signifies to oppress and vilifie.

Bosces, deducitur vel à Rad. Bosc. i.e. pudefacere, vel potius à Bos, i.e. conculcare pedibus: cui vicinum est Baz, spoliare, prædari, dirigere.

Yet take from him burdens of Wheat: that is (say some) you exort such great bribes, and lay such great burdens on them, that they are forced to sell their necessary food to feed you with money.

Others refer it to the great men, who lent the poor money till their harvest came in, and then were so rigid and severe in exacting their debts, that they made them bring their very corn which should support their Families for payment.

Others refer it to the cruel Usurers, who were not content with money for their money, but they must have corn too, which after they sold at dear rates to the poor, *Amos* 8.4,5.

But what ever Oppression it was specifically, yet in general the Prophet reproves it as a crying sin, that they dealt so harshly and cruelly with the poor, as first to rob them of their mony, and then by force or fraud to make them bring and bear upon their own shoulders that little which they had left to sustain themselves, and their families. To take away mens goods and cattel is sad, but to take away their corn, which is the

the staffe and stay of their houshold, and to make them carry it themselves, and become their own executioners, in carrying away the livelihood of their Families, is such a crying sin, that the Lord swears that hee will bear no longer with such Cannibals that devour the poor alive, *Amos* 4.1,2.

Wee have seen their Sin, now follows the Punishment, *They shall build houses of hewn stone, but shall not dwell in them.* Ordinary houses will not content these Earth-worms, they must have curious Palaces built with hewn, squared, polished stones, that they might bee beautiful, firm and durable.

Domos excisionis, i.e. excisi & dolati lapidis, Mercer.

This was their project, by rape and rapine, by bribery and extortion, they built fine houses, *But they shall not dwell in them.* This *But* spoyls all, either they shall go into Captivity, or be cut off by untimely death, as the rich fool, *Luke* 12.20. or their houses shall be burnt, or else their enemies shall possess them, according to that threatning, *Deut.* 28.30,39. *Thou shalt build a house and not dwell in it, thou shalt plant a Vineyard and not eat the grapes thereof.* But who then shall enjoy them? why thine enemy. As thou shalt betroth a wife, and thine enemy shall lye with her, so the like misery shall attend thee in thy building and planting. It is misery enough to have these things taken away by enemies, but it is a great aggravation of this misery, when after we have taken much pains to get them, and have set our hearts upon them, and are filled with hopes and expectations of enjoying the fruit of our labours, then on a sudden to have them all snatched from us, and so our hopes to be frustrated, and others to enjoy our labours, this is bitter.

Or if they should escape these miseries, yet the Lord can smite them with sicknes, so that they shall not enjoy what they Idolized; or else they have a prodigal heir, or some other vexation befalls them; so that *in the very fulness of their sufficiency they shall bee in straits*, Job 20.22. Jer. 17.11.

2 *They should plant pleasant Vineyards, but not drink the wine of them.* Great was their care and cost to build houses and plant Vineyards (under these two synecdochically are comprehended all other creature-delights) but they were deceived in their hopes, for they should neither enjoy the one, nor the other; and we see by daily experience, how these transitory things are tossed like a foot-ball from one to another;

ther; now the man hath it on his Toe, and anon another, at last comes one and trips up his heels, and gets it from them both, and at last comes death and strips them of all.

Ordinary dwellings and plain Vineyards content not these men; they must have the choysest stone buildings, and the most exquisite and desirable Vineyards, so much the Original imports, *Vineyards of desire*, i. e. most desirable and delicate Vineyards. The Hebrews have no superlative degree, and therefore they use to express it by putting the Substantive in the Genitive Case; see *Dan.* 9. 23. he is called *Ish chemedoth, a man of desires*, i. e. a most precious and desirable man. So a pleasant Land is called, *a Land of desires*, i. e. a most desirable Land, *Jer.* 3. 19.

charme chemed, Vineas desiderii, i. e. *desiderabilissimas, praestantissimas, elegantissimas.*

See more in my Com. on Hos. 13. 15. p. 45.

Yet their sin deprived them of all these temporal delights, the Lord did retaliate them in their owne kind, as they had spoyled the poor, and taken all from them, so now the *Assyrian* should come and cast them out of all.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Oppression and trampling upon the poor is a crying sin.*

It will not let the Lord rest till he bring Judgements upon the heads of the oppressors, *Psal* 109. 16. *Ezek.* 16. 49. *Joel* 3. 19. *Amos* 3. 1.

See more in my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. p. 106.

2 Obs. *Worldly men lavish all upon self.*

These should have honoured the Lord with their riches, and spent them in works of Piety and pity to the poor; but they spent them in building sumptuous houses, and pleasant Vineyards; all of the best save the best religion; they Idolized the Creature, and loved it above the Creator, this ruined them. Like Swine they fed upon the mast, but forgot the donor.

3 Obs. *Luxury breeds cruelty.*

When ordinary building cannot content, nor necessaries, please, but they must have all of the finest; then follows trampling upon the poor, wracking of rents, and inventing all base means for money. Such great sins seldome go alone; but like great men they have many attendants, *Amos* 2. 7, 8.

4 *Sin and punishment are inseparable.*

They are both yoked together in this verse. But of this oft before.

5 *Sin blasts mens labours and expellsthem.*

They must rise early, and sit up late, build houses, and plant Vineyards, but disobedience blasts all. *Deut.* 28. 30. *Micah* 6. 15. *Zeph.* 1. 13. As piety brings plenty, *Isa.* 65. 21. so sin robs us of all our pleasant things. But of this at large elsewhere.

In my Com on Hos. 13. 15. Ob. 8. p. 58, 59.

6 *God oft retaliates men, and pays them in their own kind.*

God will spoil those that spoyl his people, *Isa.* 33. 1. *Hab.* 2. 8. *Woe unto thee that spoylest, and wast not spoyled; and deal-dest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee; when thou shalt cease to spoyl, then shalt thou be spoyled.* He speaks here of the cruel *Assyrian*, who spoyled Gods people causelessly, and unprovoked; and dealt treacherously with those that offered no such measure unto him. God will retaliate such in their owne kind, and when they have done spoyling others, God will raise up the *Chaldeans* who shall spoyl them. God usually raiseth up some to deal hardly with those that deal hardly with his people These Rulers here trod upon the poor, and now the Lord raiseth up the *Assyrian* to trample on them. They built their houses upon the bones and ruines of the poor, and now they lose them. So true is that, *Job* 20. 22. *The hand of the wicked shall be upon him*, viz. to oppress and spoyl him who had spoyled others before. But of Retaliation see more on *Amos* 6. *ult.*

Verse 12.

For I know your manifold transgressions, and your mighty sins, they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.

IN this Verse we have a Reason why the Lord would bear no longer with this people, viz. because of their obstinacy, cruelty, bribery, and unrighteousness, and because the high and lofty ones of the world are apt to contemn the poor plain Prophets of the Lord, and to sleight their Message, and say to Gods *Amoses*, you wrong us, for we are not the men that you take us for, therefore the Prophet brings in the Lord himself, saying,

I

I know your manifold transgressions, and your mighty sins.

Q. d. Though you act your wickedness never so secretly, and hide your oppressions, and palliate and put glosses on your unrighteous practises before men; yet nothing is hid from mine eye. I understand your thoughts afar off, and know them before you think them, your words before you speak them, and your works before you doe them, *Psal.* 139. 1, 2, 3, 4. So that however you may deceive men with your pretences of Law and Equity, yea and deceive your selves too, yet you cannot deceive me, for all things are naked to mine eye.

The Prophet having to doe with stubborn Sinners, to make the threatning the more ponderous and effectual, he brings in the Lord himself, saying, I know your wayes, and your wickedness, you think your selves Lords Paramoune, and none may question you, or say unto you, what doe you? But you must know that there is a Lord above you, and a greater than you, to whom you must certainly and suddenly give an account.

The Prophet sets down the Sins of these great ones especially.

1 *Generally*, and in the lump.

1 They were for Number, *Rabbim*, many.
2 For Nature, *Gnatzumim*, great and grievous.

Their sins were not secret infirmities, but great and crying enormities, so hideous that they were no longer to be endured or born, and therefore the Holy Ghost multiplies words, the better to work upon them. They were guilty of *Transgressiones, manifold transgressions; Sins, and mighty sins.* The word which we render Transgression, signifies a proud transgressing of Gods Law, and a malicious rebelling against God, *Psal.* 5. 10.

Peshegnuchem, a *Pasha*ang, transgressio, prævaricatio, rebellio.

Gnatzum, fortis, potens, numerosus.

The word *Gnatzumim* signifies both mighty in strength, and many in number. Such were the sins of this people, they were for number numberless, and for nature, grand and grievous, habitual, chronical sins. They were such as admitted of all manner of aggravations. 1 They were *multitudes*, they were three transgressions, and four, or so called, *Amos* 2. 4. 6. i. e. they were exceeding many and manifold, for so the number *seven* is oft used in Scripture for many, as *Levit.* 26. 24.

Peccata fortia i. e. *gravia, grandia, crudelia, obstinata.* V. Schools-Guard, Rule 25

Eabof. 11. 2. they abounded with Idolatry, Oppression, Injustice, Security, &c. 2 All these were acted in a time when God was powring *Mercies* upon them, saving them by the hand of *Jeroboam* the second, and giving them Victory over their enemies, 2 *King.* 14. 25, 27. now these are called *strong Sins*, either because they cried strongly for punishment, and did as it were bind Gods hands that he could shew them no mercy; or rather because they were committed with a stiff and stubborn mind *strong*ly bent upon sin and wickedness, drawing on iniquity with the cords of vanity, and sin as it were with Cart-ropes, *Isa.* 5. 18. they were wilfully set on sin, and did use all means to draw it to themselves.

2 He sets down their sins particularly, specifically, and as it were by retail.

1 They afflict the just.
2 They take bribes.
3 They oppress the poor.

Hostes justi, vel affligentes justum. Vatabl.

1 *They afflict the just*, whom they should have defended. This Sin was written in Capital Letters, as it were on their fore-heads, and therefore they are so oft charged with it. The word *Tsorer* signifies to bind one hard together as we doe an enemy, and straiten, vexe, oppress, and afflict one. So *Psal.* 129. 14. *Many are they that afflict me from my youth, God hath cut their cords.*

2 *They take a bribe, viz.* to pervert Justice, contrary to Gods express command, *Exo.* 23. 8. *Deut.* 16. 17. and it is made the badge of a wicked man to doe so, *Prov.* 17. 23. they condemned the poor innocent man that could not bribe, and absolved the wicked rich man that could bribe well. Thus they justified the wicked, and condemned the just, both which are an abomination to the Lord, *Prov.* 17. 15.

Gopharon. Λύτρον, vel redemptionis pretium.

The word which we translate a Bribe, signifies a *Ransome*; these mercinary Judges put Malefactors to ransome themselves with money, and to pay a rate for their redemption. *E. G.* If one had killed a man, it was but paying a Ransome (though the Law say, no Ransome shall be accepted for such a sin, *Numb.* 35. 31.) and he was quit. So if any were accused for Theft, Adultery, Witch-craft, &c. it was but bribing Justily, and they were presently acquit, and pronounced innocent; thus

instead

instead of punishing them with death for their sins, they onely fined and merced them.

They turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.

The Judges sate in the gate to do Justice (as I have shewed before, vers. 10.) yet even there they perverted Justice. *They oppress the poor in the gate, i.e.* in the publick judgement which was exercised in the gate. In open Court they perverted the cause of the poor, either by a corrupt stating of the case, or concealing the merit of the cause, or by delays, &c. The good man trusting to the equity of his cause, is cast, and for want of a bribe (which the rich man brings) is non-suited. Thus their fountains did run poyson, their Courts of Justice were Courts of Injustice; and their Courts of Equity, courts of Iniquity; and therefore the Lord is now resolved to bear no longer with them; but even to destroy them.

In porta i.e. in publico judicio. Mer. subj.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Hardned, incorrigible sinners are not worthy of a reproof:* And therefore the Lord here turns his speech from these Rulers, and complains to himself and to his people, saying, *They afflict the just, take bribes, &c.* We do but wash a Blackmore, and labour in vain, when we speak to such posts and stones, as I have shewed elsewhere.

In my Com. on Psal. 82. 5. Obs. 1. p. 130.

2 Obs. *All the wayes and works of men are under the inspection of an All-seeing God.*

All things are naked and anatomized before the eyes of him with whom we have to do, *Psal.* 94. 9, 10. *Heb.* 4. 13. Hee knows not only an action or two, but hee knows all the wayes that men take, *Job* 23. 10. Men may deceive others, and themselves too, but they cannot deceive God; he sees through their projects, and sayes to them as the Prophet said to the wife of *Jeroboam, Come in thou wife of* Jeroboam, *why fainest thou thy self to be another than thou art?* The secret plottings and contrivements of mens hearts are not hid from him, *Psal.* 94. 11. *Ezek.* 11. 5. The great ones of the world may vail their villanies, and hide them from the eyes of men, and escape their hands; but there is a greater than they whose eyes behold all their doings, and whose hand will bring them unto Justice. All their pomp shall shortly lye in the dust, and they stand stript and naked before Gods dreadful Tribunal.

See Hildersham on *Job.* 4. 16. Lect. 14. p. 64. Dyke on *Job.* 2. 24. p. 84.

Ne peccet, Deus ipse videt, bonus Angelus astat, accusat Satanas, conscia mens cruciat. See more in my Com. on 2 Tim. 4.3. Obs. 1.

We should therefore all of us lead a life worthy of such a presence, and take heed of provoking him by our sins, who cannot look upon them but with a vindictive eye, and one look of his eye puts all into terrour; if he but look on the earth (which never sinned against him) it trembles, *Psal.* 104. 32. I have read of some, that have had such lively, sparkling eyes, that they have affrighted such as beheld them, but what are their eyes compared with Gods?

3 Obs. *Wicked men by long continuance in sin come at last to be high and mighty sinners.*

As in goodness the repetition of the act intends the habit, and the sons of Sion go on in Gods wayes to perfection, *Philip.* 3.13, 14. *Heb.* 6.1. So the sons of *Belial* conceive sin, travel with it, and then bring it to perfection, *James* 1.15. As men when they come to their full growth, are strong, and men of might; so when sinners are come to their full growth, they become great and mighty sinners, as we see, *Eccles.* 8.11. *Jer.* 3.5. and 44.16, 17. *Hos.* 2.5. They set their hearts upon sin; their greedinesse after it, shews the strength of their affection to it, *Eph.* 4.19.

See my Com. on *Hos.* 13.16. p. 109. &c.

This bodes some judgement approaching, when mens sins are for number many, and for nature hainous and habitual. As there is a woe hangs over the heads of *such as are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to power down strong drink*, Isa. 5.21. So judgements are prepared for all obdurate, mighty sinners, *Deut.* 29.19, 20. It is said of *Nimrod* that he was a mighty Hunter, *Gen.* 10.9. so we may say of too many, they are mighty Oppressors, mighty Worldlings, mighty Epicures, &c. and therefore we must look for mighty miseries. *Ingentia beneficia, ingentia vitia, ingentia supplicia.* As it is the glory of a man to be much and mighty in the service of God, *Luke* 24.19. *Act.* 7.22. So it is mens great debasement, when they are much and mighty in the service of sin and Satan, *Jer.* 8.2. *Micah* 7.3.

Fortes & strenui sunt non contra hostes, sed ad exhaurendos cæfices; gigantes non ad bellandum, sed ad potandum & peccandum.

4 Obs. *Bribery is base.*

See more in my Com. on *Psal.* 82. *Index* Bribery, and on *Amos* 4.1. *Cartwright* on 15. *Mic.*

It blindes the eyes, perverts judgement, condemns the innocent, acquits the nocent, and brings confusion and disorder into a land. These wicked men acted their sins in all the six Cases, but would confess them in no case. They acted in the Nominative case by seeking a name to themselves. In the Ge-

Genitive by fornication both spiritual and corporal, *Amos* 2. 7,8. In the Dative by Bribery. In the Accusative by detracting and slandering of the righteous. In the Vocative by flattering, and in the Ablative by robbing.

Mr. Patrick in his Jewish Hypocrisie, ch. 9. 10. &c.

5 Obs. *Perverting of justice to the oppressing of the poor, is a Land-destroying sin.*

That which brought *Israel* and *Judah* into Captivity, was more especially their sins of Injustice and Cruelty, as is fully proved by a learned Pen.

See my Com. on Psal. 82. 2, 3, 4. p. 100, &c.

Verse 13.

Therefore the prudent shall keep silence in that time, for it is an evil time.

THe Prophet goes on to shew the sad and deplorable condition of this obstinate people, whom neither God nor man could work upon. The Lord tells them in the precedent verse, that he knew all their works, and the Prophets told them of judgements coming upon them for those wicked works; but they misused the Prophets of the Lord, and hated him that reproved them in the gate, and were so resolvedly set upon sin, that the Prudent resolved to bestow no more counsel in vain upon them.

In the words we have 1 The property of the Pious, they are prudent, wise, intelligent men. True beleevers, and such as fear God, are the truly wise men of the world. They do nothing rashly and inconsiderately, but do all with good advice. They wisely compare things together, they observe the mysterious wayes of providence, and so become men of much sagacity, and can guess at the consequences of affairs. These are called prudent men 1 *Sam.* 16. 18. *Prov* 13. 16. and 16. 21. *Isa.* 3. 3. They fore-cast, and consider what is to be done and spoken, how, when, where. As his words are spoken *super rotis suis, Beophnaw.* Prov. 25. 11. in season, with a due concurrence of all circumstances, so his works are done in due season, firly and successfully.

The Original word signifies a cautious, circumspect, prudent understanding man: hence they are oft called wise men, intelligent men, and men of good understanding by a Me-

Hammaskil, ille prudens, intelligens, erudiens, sagacem intellexit, prudens fuit, consideravit, prospexit, circumspexit.

Metonymy of the effect, because Prudence is a fruit of wisdome. 2 It signifies an *Instructer and Teacher*, who gives instruction, and makes others to understand; hence many of the Psalms are intituled, *Maschil le David*, i. e. a Psalme of *David*, teaching and giving Doctrinal instruction. 3 Sometimes by a Metonymy of the effect, it is put for prosperity and happiness, because they usually attend upon Prudence. So 1 *Sam.* 18. 30. *Isa.* 52. 13.

Prudence is three-fold. { 1 Carnal. 2 Ethical and Moral. 3 Theological.

1 There is *a Carnal Wisdome* and Prudence, when men are wise only for themselves, seeking their owne ends, ease, and advancement, *Luke* 16. 8. this is so farre from wisdome, that it is called and counted folly in Gods Dictionary, *Luke* 12. 20. 1 *Cor.* 1. 19. & 3. 19.

2 There is a *Moral Prudence*, which is found in the civil wise men of the world, *Isa.* 29. 14. & 49. 7. *Matth.* 11. 25. *Acts* 13. 7.

See more in Dr. *Burges* his Ser. on *Amos* 5. 13. p. 3, 4. printed. 1660.

3 There is a *Theological* and Divine wisdome, which is conversant about Divine and Spiritual things, and in this sense the faithful and regenerate are called Wise and Prudent, *Deut.* 4. 6. *Matth.* 7. 24. and 25. 2.

See *Ward* on *Mat.* 11. 25. p. 91. *ubi plura.*

Some Criticks make Wisdome to be the speculative part, and Prudence the practical, Wisdome to be infused, and Prudence acquired. But these are so involved one in another, that one cannot be without the other; and therefore we finde them oft confounded in Scripture, and used promiscuously one for another.

2 Here is the effect of their prudence, *They shall keep silence.*

3 Here is the time when they shall keep silence, it is *In that time, viz.* in that time of *Israels* obstinacy, and in that time when God shall punish them for their obstinacy, and give them up into the hand of the *Assyrian* for a prey, for he speaks not of present, but future evils, and therefore it is not in *hoc*, but in *Isto tempore*, it is not in this, but in that time.

4 Here is the reason of their silence; and that is, because *it is an evil time*; [illegible] in respect of the evil of sin, and of the

the evil of suffering. 1. They were evil times in respect of the *evil of sin*, All manner of sin in all manner of persons abounded both in City and Country. Sin was come to that height amongst them that it was dangerous to speak truth unto them; yea they silenced the true Prophets, and commanded the *Amos* to bee gone, and molest them no more with his preaching. They hated reproof, they afflicted the just, and oppreſt the poor, therefore the Prudent shall keep silence.

Rang, denotat malum culpæ, & malum pœnæ.

2 The times were evil in respect of *the evil of Punishment*; for where the evil of sin goes before, the evil of punishment alwayes follows. The Sword, Plague, Famine, should all pursue them, and if they escaped one of those evils, yet another should arrest them, *vers.* 19. In both these respects times are called evil in Scripture, *Jer.* 18. 11. *Ephes.* 5. 16. 2 *Tim.* 3. 1. though the latter seems here to some to be the most genuine, it is a time of evil, viz. *of punishment*, of great misery and desolation, so the word is oft used for the evil of punishment, *Psal.* 27. 19. *Jer.* 15. 11. *Micah* 2. 3. therefore the prudent shall be silent before the Lord, and not once murmure against his just dispensations.

Tempore in illo, i. e. tempore pœnæ, quæ modò fuit denuntiata. vers. 11. Piscat.

3 Others but not so properly, make the words to be a comination of a punishment, *q. d.* Since you will not hearken to the counsel of my Prophets, but shut your eyes against the light, hating to be reformed, and abhorring such as speak truth unto you, vers. 10. therefore I will punish you with the silence of the true Prophets, *Ezek.* 3. 26. and other pious men; they shall bestow no more counsel in vaine upon you, since you are snarling Doggs, my holy things shall not be given to you, *Mat.* 7. 6. but I will leave you to Sycophants and Flatterers, that shall daub over your sins, and lead you blind-fold to destruction. They could not endure sound Doctrine, and therefore they should be fed with lies, for that pleased them best. There is hope of good when good men speak, their lips will disperse knowledge, *Prov.* 15. 7. but when a people shall delight in none but fools and flatterers, their ruine is not far off.

4 Others thus; their enemies shall be so Tyrannical and cruel,

Pauper si prudens, eliget potius, dum frans & potentia dominantur in judicia, pecuniam amittere, & seipsum sceleris reum aut injustum pecuniæ possessorem feteri, quam fori molestiam, judicum calumniam & honorum suorum majora multo dispendia subire. Hieron.

Hammaskil, ille prudens, intelligens, erudiens, salal intellexit, prudens fuit, consideravit, prospexit, circumspexit.

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dome. 2 It signifies an *Instru*
struction, and makes others t
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times by a Metonymy of the
happiness, because they us
1 *Sam.* 18. 30. *Isa.* 52. 1

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1 *Cor.* 1. 19. & 3. 19.

2 There is a *Moral*
wise men of the world,
Acts 13. 7.

See more in Dr. *Burges* his Ser. on *Amos* 5. 13. p. 3, 4. printed. 1660.

3 There is a *Th*
conversant about D
fense the faithful ar
dent, *Deut.* 4. 6. *Mat*

See *Ward* on *Mat.* 11. 25. p. 91. *ubi plura.*

Some Criticks m
and Prudence the
Prudence acquired
that one cannot be
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for another.

2 Here is the
silence.

3 Here is the t
that time, viz.
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in *hoc*, but in *Is*

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the evil of suffering, [illegible]
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-sons abounded [illegible]
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Non est Minister Christi qui non est ad mille mortes paratus. Chrysost.

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Silere hic sumitur pro non revelare scelera quæ grassantur, ad quod tamen silentium redactus est, non sponte suâ, sed violentiâ tyrannorum in illum sævientium. Ravanel.

crupl, that it will be their prudence not onely no matter, but silently keep in their grief to themselves, lest if they complained they should exasperate their enemies, and so be worse used. This is an ancient Glose, but not so genuine.

5. These times were evil times, for even the Rulers of the people were unruly, and corrupt both in doctrine and manners. They were grown so violent and virulent, that they would neither hear, nor bear a reproof; they sought his death, who sought their life; and threw dirt in his face, who showed them the glass; if any reproved them, they wrested and misinterpreted all their sayings, devising devices against them to destroy them. They were come to that height of sin, that the malady was too strong for the medicine; and good counsel could do them no good; it was but casting Pearls before Swine, which would be trampled under foot and bite; the more they reproved them for their Bribery, Oppression, Idolatry and cruelty, the more they enraged them, and therefore the prudent shall keep silence, since it is such an evil time. This sense suits best with the context, ver. 10, 11, 12, 13.

Sibbes, non aliis nisi profit, sibi vero malum afferet. Grotius.

Q. *But must not Ministers speak against sin, for fear of bringing themselves into danger, nor speak against the evils of the times, unless they be sure to be free from suffering?*

Ans. Ministers are bound by their Office to witness against the worst of evils in the worst of times; so did the Prophets, so did the Apostles. A Minister must not presently give over his Ministery, or forbear reproof because of some approaching danger, yet he may be silent and forbear reproof, when those sins have been sufficiently witnessed against already, and men sin not for want of light, but desperately against the light; in such a case we have no reason to run ourselves upon danger; and therefore our Saviour bids us flee such alone, *Matt.* 15. 14. when we see that our reproofs do but exasperate and harden men, we may yield for a time, and reserve our selves and our exhortations for better times; when men's passions are qualified, and they will hearken to us; so that this makes nothing for Court-Parasites, and Time-servers, who under pretence of Prudence like dumb Dogs, never once barking against the Idolatry, Superstition, Apostacy, and prophaneness of the times, for fear of displeasing the Grandees of the time; they dare not pray for Sion, nor speak in defence

Prophetas vocat prudentes, quorum munus est peccatum arguere, qui cum viderint eo tandem erupisse hominum precava, ut reversari non possint, taceburt. Sanctius.

defence of Gods Cause and People, for fear of suffering. This is so sure from prudence, that it is the greatest imprudence in the world for any man, for fear of mans wrath to run into Gods displeasure, and to avoyd Temporal paines to run into eternal, Christ will be ashamed of such as be thus ashamed of him, and his truth, before an adulterous Generation, *Mark* 8. *vlt. Rev.* 21. 8.

Obj. *Tyrants threaten me.*

Ans. And thou must learn to contemne their threatnings. He is not fit to be a Minister of Christ, that cannot suffer as well as doe for him.

Non est Minister Christi qui non est ad mille mortes paratus. Chrysost.

Every Minister is, or at least ought to be a Souldier of Christs, now a Souldier must not be a whining Milk-sop, but a hardned, seasoned peece, 2 *Tim.* 2. 3. Necessity is laid upon us, and woe to us if we preach not the Gospel, 1 *Cor.* 9. 16. When God commands us to preach, and man forbids, the Apostle in this very case tells us, that it is better to obey God than man, *Acts* 4. 19. & 5. 29. It is no dishonour to the Kings on earth, to see the King of Heaven served before them; yea the worse the times are, the more should the zeal for Gods glory consume us. When *Lot* saw the wickedness of *Sodome*, his righteous soul was vexed from day to day with their abominations. No prudent man can be totally silent, when hee sees his God openly dishonoured, as we see in *David*, *Nathan*, *Michaiah*, *Paul*, &c.

The Prophet therefore speaks not here *De jure*, but *De facto*; not what men should doe, or not doe; but he rather intimates (such was the iniquity of the times, and the malice of those in authority) that *De facto*, they would not suffer them to speak against the corruptions of the times. So that they should be silent not Actively, and Spontaneously, but Passively, by reason of the rage of wicked men, and their obstinacy in their Idolatry, Superstition, and unrighteousness. They would not suffer any to speak against these their beloved sins, or if they did, they would cast them into Prisons, or Banishment, or blast them with slanders, or some way or other make them contemptible, and then slay them.

Silere hic sumitur pro non redarguere scelera quæ grassantur, ad quod tamen silentium redactus est, non sponte sua, sed violentia tyrannorum in illum sævientium. Ravanel.

6 And lasty, the most genuine sense of the place is this; The Prophet had told them, that for their mighty and manifold sins they should lose their Houses and Lands, their

Orchards and Vineyards, and all their pleasant things; now he tells them that God was so just in his Judgements, that all pious prudent men, should in an holy silence and submissiveness of spirit, adore and admire the Justice of God therein, without any fretting or murmuring at them; though they were great and grievous, yet considering the multitude and magnitude of their sins, and comparing Gods dispensations with their provocations, they could not but say, *Righteous is the Lord, and just are his Judgements.* The true beleever which judgeth aright of sin and its concomitants, shall silently acquiesce in the evils of Punishment, which God shall bring upon *Israel*, but not in the evil of sin which men commit; so that their silence here is opposed to murmuring against God, and not to their reproof of the sins of the time; for we read that the Prophets did not hold their peace, but *Amos* and *Hosea* especially did sharply reprove those wicked men, and denounced Gods Judgements against them to the last.

Silebit i. e. *non murmurabit contra Deum, quia agnoscunt Pœnam esse justam. Piscat.* See more on Amos 6. 10.

Tacebit prudens, probans & laudans justum Dei judicium & impiorum supplicium.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Pious men are prudent men.*

He that truly fears God is the true *Hammaskil*, he is the only wise, intelligent, prudent man. When we walk exactly according to Rule, that is true wisdome, *Ephes.* 5. 15. Hence fifty times in the *Proverbs* the godly man is called a Wise man, and every wicked man a fool. When men know the true God, and serve him in a true manner with a perfect heart, this is real and supernatural wisdome, *Job* 28. *ult.* all other men be they never so worldly wise are fools, and madmen (as I have proved at large elsewhere) Hee only is the wise Merchant that hath parted with all for Christ, *Matth.* 13. 44. The world looks upon good men as a pack of Fools, scarce fit to live in the world, but see how the Holy Ghost here dignifies them with the title of *prudent men*, whose understandings are well inlightned in the knowledge of their duty, and what is fit to be done, in respect of time, place, manner, event, &c: he searcheth into the very bottom of things, and sees them inwardly.

Quicunq; peccat, agit contra rationem rectam, quæ est prudentia. Aquinas. In my Com. on 2. Tim. 3. 9.

Rerum exitus prudentiæ metitur. Boethius.

1. Their prudence appears, in a wise *discerning of times and seasons.* There is a fit time for every thing, and what is done in

in that season it is beautiful. Now the prudent man observes the season, he hath a singular skill in timing a word, *Isa* 50.4. He knows when to speak, so did *Abigail*, 1 Sam. 25.36. and *Hester* 1.13. and when to be silent 2 *King*. 18.36. It was an high commendation of the men of *Issachar*, that they were men of understanding and knew the times, and what *Israel* ought to do, 1 *Chron*. 12.32.

See Dr. *Annesly* Ser. on 2 Chro. 22.32. preached 1655.

2 His prudence appears in works of *Piety*, he reads, prayes, meditates, &c. with prudence and discretion. He observes fit times to hear, and he is swift to hear, *James* 1.19. He watcheth unto prayer, and observes the fittest times for that exercise, *Ephes*. 6.18.

3 *In works of mercy*. 1 To the *soul*, he prudently times his speech, and wisely considereth the party which he speaks to, and what his condition requires, *Isa*. 50.4.

See *Caryl* on *Job*. 3.2. p. 320.

2 To the outward man, he gives discreetly according to those known circumstances, required in giving.

before on *Amos* 4.4. p. 50. &c.

Est modus in dando, Quid, cur, cui, quomodo, quando.

4 In *executing Justice*, he weighs and ponders all circumstances, and then gives sentence accordingly.

See my Com. on *Psal*. 82. 4. p. 112.

5 In the discharge of his particular *calling*, he orders his affairs with discretion, *Psal*. 112.5. *Prov*. 14.8, 15.

6 He fore-sees dangers, and prepares for them before they come, *Job* 3.25. *Prov*. 22.3. and stops troubles in the beginning, *Gen*. 13.8, 9. He is quick-sighted, and wise as a Serpent, though harmless as a Dove, *Matth*. 10.16. Religion doth not destroy our wisdome, but rectifies it, and makes it more solid. Hence *Jacob* used all prudent means to pacifie *Esau*, Gen. 38. 4, 5, &c. and *Paul* to deliver himself, pleads that he was a *Roman*, and set the Pharisees and Sadducees at variance about the Resurrection, the better to escape himself, *Act*. 16.37, 38. and 22.25. and 23.7. and Christ himself used it, *Mat*. 21.24. Hence he is said to deal prudently, *Isa*. 52.13.

7 His Prudence appears in his *Prudent choice*. A mans wisdome appears in nothing so much as in that. He passeth by transitory, fading, uncertain, earthly things, and chuseth real, solid, substantial, durable riches, which none can take from him, *Luke* 10.41, 42. and 16.9. He seeks Gods face and favour, and makes him his ultimate and chiefest good. Hence to be wise, and seek after God are joyned together, *Psal*. 14.2. He

is most solidly wise, who doth most solidly and seriously seek God.

8 They act so frequently as if they were to do all themselves, and when they have done all, yet they rest upon God, and seek unto him by prayer as if they had done nothing, *Gen.* 32.7. to 11. and 43.10. to 14. *Neh.* 4.9.

Nullum numen abest, si sit prudentia. Juven. Sat. 10.

So that prudence you see is a Cardinal vertue, of all vertues it is one of the most eminent and excellent, and makes us most like unto God. Where this vertue is in reality, no vertue is wanting. This is one special means to raise men to honour, as we see in *Joseph*, *David*, *Abigail*, *Nehemiah*, *Daniel*, &c.

In omni virtute debet esse. 1 *Prudentia.* 2 *Justitia.* 3 *fortitudo.*

To attain it, 1 We must *beg it of the God of Wisdome and Prudence*, who is the true doner of it, 1 *Chron.* 22.12. 1 *King.* 3.9.11,12. *Psal.* 119. 125, 144, 169. 2 *Cor.* 1. 10, 11, 12. *James* 1.5.

2 *Get acquaintance with the word of God*, make it the man of your counsel, consult with it in all your actions and undertakings. This will make you wiser than the Ancient, wiser than your enemies (though they may be deep Politicians) and wiser than your Teachers, *Psal.* 119.98, 99, 100, 104.

Temeritas est florentis ætatis, prudentia senectutis, Cicero.

3 *Treasure up experiments*: As in all other Arts and Sciences a man can never excell, till he hath by long practice gained experience: so it is here, We see that youth it is heady and rash, but Prudence is usually with the aged, *Job* 12.12. *With the Ancient is wisdome.*

[See more *Balls Power of Godliness*, l.1.c.2.p.3. to 29. *Bain* on *Eph.* 5.15. *Hieron* on *Psal.* 51.6. *Leighs Body of Divinity*, l.7.c.29.p.58.&c. *Lessius de Jure & Just.* p.1.&c.]

2 Obs. *That it is a point of prudence sometimes to keep silence.*

As there is a time to speak, *Eccles.* 3.7. *viz.* when God may be glorified, and our brethren edified, so there is a time to be silent, *viz.* when we have no call to speak, or understand not the depth of the matter in question; or when our own passions, or the passions of those we speak to are up, and men are in a heat, then it is good to be silent. A man that will give counsel, or take counsel must have a composed, calmed, quiet spirit, before he can profit himself, or others; even Christ himself, though he had many things to say, yet seeing his Disciples could

could not bear them, he concealed them, *Joh.16.12.* Hence silence is oft made a note of prudence, *Prov.11.12.* and 12.16. and 13.17.27.28. Herein *Saul's* wisdome appeared, 1 *Sam.10.* *ult.* and *David's*, Psal.39.12,13,14. and Christs, *Mat.26.63.*

But especially when a people are incorrigible and incurable, when they are dogs and swine, flying in the face of a reprover, and trampling Gods truths under their feet, we are then commanded to forbear; *Prov.9.7.8. Hos.4.4.17. Mat.7.6.* and 15.14. least they abuse, not onely the truth, but those that publish it too, for God is tender as of his Gospel, so of those that publish it also. So when those sins we reprove have been sufficiently witnessed against already, so that men sin not for want of light, but directly against light, in such a case we have no obligation to run our selves into danger; so when there is no probability that the evil which we bring our selves into, shall be ballanced with any proportionable good to others; for this is an affirmative precept, and bindes *semper*, but not *ad semper*; it bindes at all times, but not to all times, but only when God may be glorified, his people edified, and his enemies mouths stopped; and therefore it is well observed by a Reverend Divine; *That when times are so evil, that they will not bear evil to be spoken against, nor good to be spoken, it is time for the prudent to keep silence; for though in some cases we must bear our testimony openly for truth and holiness, whether men will bear it or no, yet we are not urged with that necessity at all times, &c.* Such times there may be, when it will be our wisdome to be silent (at least for a time) as Mariners use to cast anchor in a storm, and rest for a time till it be over, and Water-men when the Tyde is against them, they creep by the Bank-sides till having advantage of the Tyde they can get over more easily. *Paul* was zealous against *Diana* at *Ephesus*, yet his prudence so moderated his zeal, that he spake not particularly against *Diana*, but onely delivered this general Doctrine, *That they were no Gods which were made with hands.* The prudent man considers not only what he ought to do, but also what he can do, and sometimes gives place to the storm, reserving himself for better times, as *Elijah* did when he fled from *Jezabel*, and *Paul* was let down in a Basket.

Mr. Carylon Job 29.9. p. 492.

See my Comm. on 2 *Tim.*4.2. p.339.

Many cry out the times are bad, when by their unadvised speeches,

See Mr. *Edw. Symons* Ser. on *Amos* 5.13. preacht 1642. *Greenhil* on *Ezek.* 29.21. and Mr. *Baxters* Ser. on *Jam.* 1.25. p. 231.

speeches, rash censures, and bitter invectives, even against Dignities, and those in Authority, they help to make them worse. This they make a part of their wisdome, when they never shew themselves more fools, and indiscreet; for if they be prudent that keep silence in evil times, then they are fools that prate so much. Prayer and patience is the best cure for calamitous times.

See *Balls* Power of Godliness l. 1. c. 2. p. 18. &c. Against Scepticks *Gelaspies* Miscel. c. 18. p. 134.

Caut. I speak not this as if we might dissemble our Religion, and like Scepticks deny that to morrow which we hold to day, and so have a menstruous faith, turning with every wind, that so we may sleep in a whole skin. No, we must be rooted and grounded in the truth, alwayes ready to make an open, plain, and bold confession when ever God shall call us to it by Authority, *Matth.* 10.8, 9. *Rom.* 10.9, 10. 2 *Tim.* 2.12. 1 *Pet.* 3.15. we must be ready not onely (πρὸς ἀπόκρισιν, but πρὸς ἀπολογίαν) to make an answer, but to Apologize in defence of the truth, else we shal be accounted as enemies, *He that is not with me, is against me*, Matth. 12.30. There is no true faith within, when no true love without.

Parum interest inter fidem negare, & nolle asserere. Fulgent.

3 Obs. *The godly must bee patiently silent in calamitous times.*

They must not fret nor fume, but kiss the hand that smites them, judging themselves, and justifying God in all his dispensations to us, such a holy submissive frame was in *David*, 2 Sam. 16.10, 12. Psal. 39.2. and 37.7. and *Job* 1.21. and 2.10. and 40.5. and in Christ, *Act.* 8.32. 1 *Pet.* 2.21.

See more in *Amos* 6.10.

The prudent man can see a good hand of providence in all, he can see light in darkness, comfort in discomfort, rising in ruining, all things for good, *Rom.* 8.28. and this keeps him silent. He sees an absolute Soveraignty in providence, the Lord may take away health, wealth, life, &c. and none may say unto him, what dost thou? *Job* 9.12. The prudent man sees all Gods dispensations, ordered with *infinite wisdome*, Job 9.4. The Lord weighs all the afflictions which he dispenseth to his people, *Jer.* 18.11. and frames the evil which he brings upon them, *Lam.* 2.17. yea he deliberates and deviseth evil even against *Babylon*, Jer. 51.12. He likewise seeth *Justice* in all, and that he is punished less than his sins deserve; and this makes him lay his hand upon his mouth, and say,

say, though the Lords dispensations seem harsh and hard, yet the Lord is righteous in all his wayes, and holy in all his works, *Psal.* 145. 17. *Micah* 6. 9.

Lastly, he considers that all is done, *by an infinite reaching providence*, which looks at many things at once; the same Warre shall humble the Church, destroy *Babylon*, and set *Jeremy* free; God hath Plots above the plots of Polititians, and ends that they think not of; his wayes are deep and mysterious, above our reach, *Isa.* 45. 15. The same pillar of Cloud shall be dark to *Egypt*, yet give light to *Israel*. The same fire shall refine the metal, and consume the dross; let patience then have its perfect work, *Jam.* 1. 4. so shall we keep the possession of our owne souls, and it may be get the possession of other mens too.

Motives to Patience, see my Com. on Hos. 12.13.p.10,11. Mr. *Symons* Ser. on Luk.21. 19. p. 97, &c.

Verse 14.

Seek good and not evil, that yee may live, and so the Lord the God of Hosts shall be with you, as yee have spoken.

THe Prophet once more renewes his Exhortation to Repentance, he had called on them thrice before, *Seek, seek, seek*; he comes now with a fourth *Quærite* (if by any means he might work upon them) *Seek good and not evil.*

In the words we have
1 A Precept.
2 A Prohibition.
3 A Promise.

1 We have a Precept, *Seek good*, viz. such as is prescribed by God in his Word: q. d. *You have formerly followed evil, and the Devil the father of it, in worshipping Idols which are oft called Devils; but now return to the Lord, seek good, especially seek God who is the fountain of goodness, that you may live indeed.*

Judicious *Calvin* following the Chalde Paraphrase, renders it, *Seeke beneficence*, (*ut salva reverentia tanto viro dignissima*) I conceive this Exposition to be too strait, for by seeking of good is here properly meant, seeking of God, as appears by comparing this place with vers. 4, 6. To seek God is

Quærere bonum nihil aliud est quam dare operam beneficentiæ. Calvin in locum.

is to seek good, and to finde life, for with him is the fountain of life. *Psal.* 36. 9.

2 I do not find the word *Tob* to signifie beneficence in any place of Scripture, but it is rendred good, pleasant, profitable, fair, sweet, joyous; all which are very desirable things, and therefore should quicken our endeavours after them.

3 Yet I deny not but beneficence may be one branch of that good which is here called for; seeing they had been given to violence and rapine, now he calls upon them to return, and by beneficence and works of mercy to break off their trade of cruelty, and to seek God, and all manner of good contained both in the first and second Table, that so they might live.

Quærere bonum & non malum, est studiose sectari bonum, à malo vero abhorrere; atque adeò est resipiscere, pietati & bonis operibus studere, & vitam sanctam agere. Ravanel.

2 Here is a *Prohibition*, *Seek not evil* any longer, to which you have been addicted for so many years, *Amos* 2. 4. If you will be mine (saith the Lord) you must give your sins a Bill of divorce, for no man can serve two such contrary Masters. *Shun evil*, i. e. all manner of sin without exception, for Sin and Evil are Synonyma's in Scripture, *Rom.* 7. 19, 20. that which the Apostle calls evil in one verse, he calls it sin in the next. Sin is truly called evil, 1. *Formaliter & per se.* 2 *Effectivè.* 1. It is evil in its owne nature, it is a transgression of Gods Law, and is directly opposite to him who is the chiefest good. 2. It is the cause of all the evil of punishment both in this life and the next, *Rom.* 6. 23. Sin is the cause of Gods Wrath, and Gods Wrath brings destruction and misery with it; so that sin being *Causa causæ*, must needs be *Causa causati.* 3. It comes from the Devil, that evil one, and leads to him, and so may well be called *evil*, 1 Joh. 3. 8.

Rang, malum, in quam, durum.

3 Here is a double promise to incourage them to set upon the duty. 1. *You shall live*, of which before, vers. 4. 2. *The Lord of Hosts will be with you*; if you will but return, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance, you shall be secured from wrath to come, and received into Gods favour, he will dwell in the midst of you, and bless you. There is an Emphasis and weight

neighe in that little word, So, Seek good and not evil, and when you are so qualified, fitted, and prepared by holiness for communion with an holy God, and your wills are made conformable to Gods will, then he will be with you, by his Wisdome to direct you, by his Power to protect you, by his Mercy to pardon you, by his goodness to provide for you, so as you shall want nothing that may be for your good, according to those precious promises, *Levit.* 26. 12, 13. 1 *King.* 6. 13. *Psal.* 84. 11. Thus when the people were called to the Passeover, they are commanded to prepare themselves, and so to come, 2 *Chron.* 35. 6.

4 Here is the manner how the Lord will be with them, and that is, *Even as yee have spoken*, q. d. you boast and brag that you are my people, my peculiar, my inheritance, my Children, and that I will direct you, defend you, and provide for your safety, but these are but your owne vaine dreams and delusions, for you cannot be my people, so long as you walk contrary to my commands, persecuting my Prophets, trampling upon my Poor, hating righteousness, and loving iniquity. But if you will be my people indeed, then walk as becomes my people, *Seek good, and not evil*; returne sincerely unto me, and then *the Lord will be with you indeed, as you have spoken.* You shall finde him really present with you, to assist and comfort you, but till this be done you cannot expect his favour, two cannot walk together till they be agreed, *Amos* 3. 3.

Others read it thus; *So the Lord shall be with you as you desire*, q. d. It is your desire and prayer that God should abide with you, doe you seek and serve him faithfully, and then you shall finde it true that yee have spoken. But the former reading is most genuine. The sum of all is this, *Hitherto your life, O yee men of* Israel, *hath been a series of iniquity, you have followed Idols and evil, but not good; you have contemned God despised his Prophets, despited his Spirit, oppreſt the poor, multiplied sin; and yet you promise your selves peace and prosperity, life and happiness, boasting that the Lord is your God, and you are his Covenant-people, and therefore you need not fear. But if you will indeed live, then hearken to my counsel, Turne from your Idols, Worship the Lord in sincerity, amend your lives, and give up your selves to God, walking in paths of piety and obedi-*

ence before him, and then the Lord will be with you indeed, and you shall live in his favour for ever.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *The destruction of wicked men is from themselves*, Hos. 13. 9.

See Mr. *Obad. Sedgwick* on Isa. 55. 1. p. 397, 402, &c. See *Fenner* on Wilful Impenitency.

The fault is not in God, for he calls upon them here again, and again, to return and live, and swears that he desires not the death of sinners, *Ezek.* 18. 31, 32. & 33. 11. he gives them hopes of pardon if they will but come in, and lay down the armes of their rebellion: God is not to be blamed, it is mens owne wilful impenitency that ruines them.

2 Obs. *Such as seek God shall find good.*

Before he called upon them to seek God, and now he explaines himself, and tells them what that is, it is to seek good. Good is the object of our desires, now there is none good but God, he only is Essentially, infinitely, absolutely, and independently good; all the good that is in the Creature it is finite, dependent, derivative, and is found eminently only in God. All the goodness that is scattered up and down in the Creature meets eminently in him, so that have him, and have all. The Devil, the World, and Sin promise men good, but there is no reality in those promises. They make golden promises, but leaden performances; they promise joy, but bring forth sorrow; they promise liberty, but they bring men into thraldome. But God is better than his word to his people; and doth for them above all that they can speak or think. Seek therefore him, and you shall finde all manner of good for soul and body, for this life and a better; and after all changes you shall experimentally conclude with *David*, *It is good for me to draw near to God*, Psal. 73. ult.

See a nine fold good in God, Mr. *Obad. Sedgwick* on Isa 55. 2. ch. 11. p. 441.

3 Obs. *It is not sufficient that we seek good, but we must also turn from evil.*

God hath oft joyned them together, and we may not seperate them, *Psal.* 34. 14. & 37. 27. *Isa.* 1. 16, 17. *Matth.* 3. 10. *Luke* 13. 7, 8. *Ephes.* 4. 22, 23. *Colos.* 3. 9, 10. 1 *Pet.* 3. 11. It is not sufficient that we turne from evil, but we must doe good. A negative Christian is no Christian. *Dives* did not rob *Lazarus*, yet is condemned for not releeving him. So those,

those, *Matth.* 25. 42, 43. &c. Many would have God and their sins too, like the *Samaritans* that served God, and their Idols too, 2 *King.* 17. 33, 34. but he that turns to God, must give a bill of divorce to his former sins, he must forget his kindred and his fathers house, *Psal.* 45. 10, 11. We that were sometimes slaves to sin, must now become servants to God, and it must be as natural and delightful to us to serve him, as ever it was to sin against him. As a vessel that is full of poyson must bee emptied of it, before it can bee filled with better liquor; so our hearts must be purged from corruption, before they can be filled with grace. Most pretend that they are the Lords people, and that they belong to him, but if we be his, he saies to us; as *Jehu* said to the men of *Samaria* when they complemented with him, and told him they were his servants, and would do all that he should bid them. *If you will be mine*, (saith *Jehu*,) *then cut off the heads of your Masters sons, and send them to me*, 2 King. 10. 5, 6. So if we be the Lords real servants, we must cut off not the heads of our sons, but of our sins; nor sacrifice our children, but our selves to God, mortifying our beloved corruptions, and then he will be our God, and we shall be his people.

4 Obs. *The special presence of God with a people, is a choice mercy.*

Hence the Church so oft glories in this, *Psal.* 46. 1, 7, 11. *The Lord of hosts is with us, and the God of* Jacob *is our refuge*; and sadly laments the want of it, *Jer.* 14. 8, 9. as the in-let into all misery, *Deut.* 31. 17. *Jer.* 6. 8. Gods special presence is the glory of a place, *Zach.* 2. 5. God himself will be an impregnable wall of fire to defend his people, and to offend their adversaries, and their glory in the midst of them. Where God comes, peace and plenty, consolation and protection, and all good comes. Hence they are pronounced blessed and happy, that have the Lord for their God, *Psal.* 144. *ult.* as I have shewed at large elsewhere. As the residence of a King is the glory of a place, so Gods presence amongst his people makes them glorious. Hence the name of Gods Church, is *Jehovah-Shammah*, *The Lord is there*, Ezek. 48. *ult.* hee is there as the founder, favourer, and preserver of it. It is more to say, *The Lord is here*, than to say peace and plenty, and all creature-comforts are here, you may make what you

In my Com. on *Psal.* 73. 25.

will out of it, for all happiness is summed up in this short prediction, *I am with thee.*

5 Obs. *Impenitent sinners may think themselves highly in Gods favour, when he is greatly incensed against them for their wickedness.*

These Israelites because they had some priviledges, therefore they concluded that God loved them, and would never punish them for their Idolatry, bribery, cruelty. But they conceited that he would abide still amongst them, as they had vainly said; but the Lord tells them, That he abhorred both them and their services whilst they walked in such irreligious practises, vers. 21, 22, 23. So it was in *Judah*, their Judges were corrupt, and their Prophets covetous, yet they lean upon the Lord, and conclude that God was amongst them, and for them still, *Micah* 3. 11. but vers. 12. they found that he was amongst them to their sorrow.

VERSE 15.

Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgement in the gate, it may be that the Lord God of Hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.

THE Prophet still goes on with his Exhortation to Repentance, he had to do with an hardened people, upon whom sleight Exhortations would make no impression, such hard knots and knarls must have hard beetles and wedges; such tough humours must have stronger physick; and therefore the Prophet that he might drive this nail to the head, renews his Exhortation, and calls upon them a fifth time to forsake their evil wayes, and to turn to the Lord who was ready to receive them.

Repentance consists of two parts: The first is a dying to sin: The second is a living to Righteousness. We have both in the Text. 1 We must *hate evil*, there is dying to sin. 2 *Love good*, there is living to Righteousness.

Sinen vang, odio habete & prosequimini malum.

Hate evil, that is, hate sin which is the evil of evils. It is evil in itself, and the cause of all the evils in the world. Do not only forbear sin, and refrain from it for a time, and then return with the dog to his vomit; but hate it, not with a sleight,

sleight, rookless hatred, but with a deep, implacable hatred, such as men use to have against their deadly enemies, whom they prosecute with the greatest violence.

Do good. It is not sufficient that we shun evil, but we must also do good. We must not onely pull up weeds, but we must bring forth good fruit, for man, matter and manner. We must do good not compulsively and forcedly, but *freely*, Psal. 110. 3. *sincerely* out of love to goodness, *cheerfully*, Deut. 28. 47. and *constantly*, Luke 1. 5, 6, 7. *Zachary* and *Elizabeth* lived in the dayes of *Herod* a known Tyrant, yet they feared him not, but kept their righteousness, not onely in their youth, but in their old age, the Text saith they were well stricken in years, yet they continued righteous before God.

Aheba tob, ardenter & vehementer diligite bonum.

Justi fuere justitiâ sinceriâ, non simulatâ, nec tantum hominibus se probabant, sed Deo. Cartwr. Harm.

3 Because their Master-sin was injustice, therefore he calls upon them to testifie the truth of their repentance by parting with their beloved sin, establishing justice openly in the gate, by setting up such just Judges as should execute justice faithfully and impartially without respect of persons, *q.d. Hitherto ye have neglected justice*, Amos 4. 1. and 5. 12. *and have made your lusts your Laws, and have ruled according to your own will, and not according to my will; but now repent, and execute justice, then will I shew mercy and favour to you.*

4 The better to encourage them, here is a promise of mercy. *The Lord will be gracious to the remnant of* Joseph. The *Assyrian* had made great slaughters amongst them, and left them but a remnant, 2 *King.* 14. 26. yet he bids this remnant return, for then *he would be gracious to the remnant of* Joseph, that is to the remnant of *Israel*, as before, verse 6. He had told them before, vers. 3. that God would decimate them, and here he tells them that God would be merciful to this decimated Remnant if they would but return to him.

5 To keep them from security, the Prophet comes in with a *peradventure*, the Lord will bee gracious to you: He sayes not *positively* and *absolutely*, The Lord will destroy you, for then hee had made them desperate; nor yet assertively that God would deliver them, for that would have made them presumptuous and careless; but he useth a prudent, well tempered speech, which on the one hand might keep them from presumption, and on the other from desperation. So wise

and

and cautious (should all Gods Ministers be) yet he gives them a little crevise of light and hope, and comes with a *peradventure* the Lord may yet be gracious to them. He speaks somewhat doubtfully to shew the difficulty of the work, and the better to excite their industry, and awaken them out of their security. Such *bene sperantium formula*, such hints of hope are very frequent in Scripture, 1 *Sam.*14.6. and 2.12,22. and 16.12. *Lam.*3.29. *Joel* 2.14. *Jonah* 3.9. *Zeph.*2.3.

Ob. *The Papists to keep their vassals in darkness and doubting, amongst other Scriptures they bring in this to prove that no man can be assured of his Election and Salvation in this life.*

Answ. But the Answer is easie; 1 The Lord doth not speak here of the Election, or eternal salvation of such as truly repent; but of their deliverance from outward afflictions and calamities which were threatned against them for their sins, vers.6. These sometimes the Lord inflicts upon his people notwithstanding their repentance (as we see in *David*) and this he doth either for chastisement to make them flye from sin for the future, or else for trial.

2 The Lord sometimes after he hath threatned judgements upon the wicked, yet upon their feigned humiliation holds his hand (that the world may see how highly he esteems the true repentance of his people) as we see in *Ahab* and the *Ninivites*. Considering therefore these various dispensations of God, the Prophet speaks doubtfully here, and exhorts them to repent, referring the event to Gods wise and gracious providence. So that such places speaking of temporary chastisements, make nothing against the certainty of our Election.

3 The particle *Ulai*, peradventure, is not alwayes *dubitative*, but sometimes *assertive*, *q.d.* seek the Lord sincerely, and then without doubt, he will receive you graciously, and so the word is used, *Josh.*14.12. *Peradventure the Lord will be with me, and I shall drive them out.* *Caleb* speaks not here dubitatively, but beleevingly, *q.d.* Though the work be difficult, yet the Lord will be with me, and by his help I shall drive out these formidable Giants out of *Canaan*, so *Hester* 4.14. So here the Prophet doth not question whether God will receive a penitent sinner to mercy, for that the Scripture proves abundantly, *Ezek.*33.11. but the Prophet by this *peradventure*, gives

gives them some hopes that if they would turn to God, he would turn to them, and either remove or sanctifie these calamities which were coming on them.

4 *Dan.* Suppose we grant that it is a doubting speech, yet it makes not for their purpose; for it is not to be referred to God, as though it were doubtful whether he would pardon the sins of penitents, for we have his hand and seal for that. But it is to be referred to those secure sinners, of whose repentance the Prophet might well doubt, lest either it would be none at all, or else but feigned and hypocritical.

Yea fifthly, Should we grant that it is a doubtful speech, and to be referred to God, yet it maketh nothing for Popish or Arminian doubting, for the Prophet seeing to what a height of impiety these sinners were come, thought it not fit to comfort them presently, and raise them up suddenly, but first to humble them, and by speaking doubtfully to give them a hint of the hainousness of their sins; as though it might well be doubted whether the Lord would forgive them or no, that so they being feared and humbled, might be fitted for mercy: And because things that are hardly come by are more earnestly sought, therefore the Prophet intimates unto them, that it was no easie matter to obtain forgiveness for such hainous sins, that he might hereby incite them to a more thorow repentance, and crying for mercy.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *The doubting must be sin pressed upon us.*

This People were so hardned and habituated in sin, and Sathan had so besotted them, that they took darkness for light, and evil for good; so that the Prophet was forced to double and treble his Exhortations to them and to give them line upon line, and Precept upon precept, and to drive the nails as the Temple day after day, till they were fastned in their hearts, *Eccles.* 12. 11 We are like a dull Knife, which must be whetted over and over till it be brought to an edge; It is the very metaphor of the Holy Ghost, *Deut.* 6. 7. *Thou shalt teach* (or whet) *my words upon thy Children*; they must so sharpen it that it may make a deep impression upon their hearts.

Shanan, ite avit, repetiit, acuit.

See the evil of Sin in D. *Preston*, on Acts 9. 6. p. 271, 272. D. *Bolton*: Ser. on 2 Sam. 24. 10. & Mr. *Burroughs* Evil of sin. B. *Ushers* Meditat. p. 93, 121.

1. Obj. *Sin is an evil thing.*

1 Hate evil, that is, hate sin; it is indeed the evil of evils; all other plagues and evils are as nothing compared with this. A man may lye under sad afflictions, and yet be under dear affections. It is sin alone that makes us the object of Gods hatred, and therefore it should be the object of our; it should be abominable in our sight which is so abominable in it self, *Jer.* 44. 4.

2 Obj. *We must not only forbear sin, but we must hate it.*

As many a man refraines from an Oath, that yet never fears an Oath, *Eccles.* 9. 2. so many a man forbears sin, that doth not truly hate it. A wicked man for fear, or shame, or for some self-ends may refraine sin for a time, but a good man hates it with a *deep, deadly, implacable, irreconcileable hatred.* Such as love the Lord cannot but hate evil, *Psal.* 97. 10. yet they rather it, non abhorrency is the height of hatred, *Rom.* 12. 9. *Abhor that which is evil*; hate it, as you would hate dislike it self.

A'πoστυγεῖτε, *abhorrentes à malo.* The simple Verb imports detestation, which is increased by the composition.

3 We must hate it *universally*, true hatred is τελεία μῖσος, (saith *Aristotle*) it is against the whole kind. He that truly hates one sin as it is sin, will hate every sin, *Quatenus ipsum includit de omni.* As the Persecutors hatred is not against one or two good men, but against the whole Church of God, his desire is, that the very name of *Israel* might be had no more in remembrance, *Psal.* 83. 4. and therefore they seek to raze it to the very foundation, *Psal.* 137. 7. even so should we deal with sin.

See D. *Reynolds* on the Passions. Chap. 12. 13, 14, &c. *Church* his Miscel. p. 107. & D. *Tho. Taylors* Ser. folio. p. 239. *Balls* Power of Godliness, lib. 3. ch. 3. p. 201.

3. We must hate it not only *Odio inimicitiæ*, not only fly from it, but pursue it with an hatred of enmity.

4 Obj. *Executing of Justice and Judgments is a duty very pleasing unto God.*

Hence the Lord so often calls for it both here, and elsewhere, *Jer.* 1. 17. *Psal.* 82. 3, 4. See my Christian for that place.

5 Obj. *When the Lord delivers his people from outward Judgments, or pardons their sins, it is meer gracious mercy, but no merit of ours that moves him to it.*

Peradventure the Lord will be gracious to you; It is one of Gods royal Attributes to be *Gracious*, and to love *freely*,

Exod.

Luke 14. 8. from the Alpha of our Election, to the Omega of our Salvation, all is Free-grace, as I have shewed elsewhere. In my Comm. on 2 Tim. 4. 8. p. 408, 409.

6 Obs. *In times of distress God usually gives his people some grounds of hope, and some glimpse of comfort to quicken them to duty.*

Hence he so oft comes with a peradventure God may give repentance; 2 *Tim.* 2. 25. who can tell, and who knowes whether God may not repent of the evil that he intends against us? *Joel* 2. 14. *Jonah* 3. 9. let us then use the means, and commit the success to God. Take away hope, and you take away endeavour; impossibility of obtaining breaks the heart. Though thy sins have been great and grievous, yet pray, and use the means, peradventure they may be pardoned, *Acts* 8. 22, 23. arise and be doing, and say as *Jonathan* did, when he went up against the Philistines, 1 *Sam.* 14. 6. *Come, let us go against these uncircumcised; it may be the Lord will work for us, for it is no one with him, to save with many, or with few.* Be not therefore dejected or despondent, it is the nature of faith to oppose discouragements, Love knowes no difficulties, but makes men active; say thus as the Lepers, 2 *King.* 7. 3, 4. *Why sit we here till we dye? if we say in the City we shall dye of the famine, if we sit still we perish, come, let us fall upon the Host of the Syrians, we can but dye. Nothing venture and nothing have.*

Vers. 16, 17.

Therefore the Lord, the God of Hosts, the Lord saith thus, Wailing shall be in all streets, and they shall say in all High wayes, alas, alas! and they shall call the Husbandman to mourning, and such as are skilful of lamentation, to wailing.

And in all Vineyards shall be wailing, for I will pass through thee, saith the Lord.

THe Prophet had often fore-warned this obstinate people of Judgements approaching; and called upon them to fly from the wrath to come; but since they contemned the Word

and warnings of the Lord, he tells them now that the Sword should come and cut them off; and as they had sinned generally both in City and Country, so now they should be punisht generally, for all places should be filled with weeping and wailing.

The Prophet having finisht his Exhortation to Repentance, now returns to his Threatnings again; where we have the sad Calamities which were coming upon *Israel*;

1. By the wailing which should be in all streets.
2. By the weeping which should bee in all High-wayes.

2. By the Persons which should mourn.
1. Natural, real mourners, as the Citizen, Husbandman, Vinitor.
2. Artificial, hired mourners, and such as had skil in Lamentation.

3. Here is the reason and ground of all this weeping and wailing, and that is *Israels* impenitency, and contempt of those warnings which God gave them by the Prophets. They would not hearken to their counsel, but hated reproof, *Therefore wailing shall be in all streets.*

4. Here is the certainty of all this, *It is the Lord, the God of Hosts that sayes it.* The better to awaken them, he tells them they had not to doe with a dead Idol, or with an impotent man, but with an Omnipotent God, who was able to inflict whatever he had threatned against them, as appears by the majestick Titles which are given to him, who is the Lord, the God of Hosts. This people were apt to sooth themselves, and cry peace when there was no peace, and therefore the Prophet deals plainly with them, and bids them not flatter themselves with thoughts of impunity, for their mirth should now be turned into mourning, and their singing into sorrow; yea such sad calamities should come upon them, that all should mourn, both Citizens and rusticks, both real and Artificial mourners.

1 The *Citizen* shall lament in the streets, the loss of his friends, and riches.

2 The *Husband-man* shall lament, to see all his labours swept away by the cruel *Assyrian*.

3. The

3 The *Vinitor* that was wont to sing for joy, shall now lament for the loss of his Vintage.

4 All others should lament in the very high wayes, the several distresses which should come upon them, crying, Alas! Alas!

Ho, ho, heu, heu! quæ vox est gementis & plangentis stragem Samariæ. Hier.

5 Their calamity should be so great, that those which were wont to be hired in an Histrionical, mimical manner to lament and howl at Funerals, should now mourn in sober sadness, and good earnest, and therefore the Prophet sayes, they shall call not only *for the Husbandmen, but also for those that are skilful in lamentation*, that they may weep together. As in a time of mirth men call their neighbours together to rejoyce with them, *Luke* 15.6. So in this time of great mourning, they shall call the Citizen, the Husbandman, the Vinitor, and the Artificial mourner to bear their parts in this doleful Ditty.

Call for such as are skilful of lamentation to wailing.

It was the custome of those times in those Eastern Countries in times of great mourning to send for singing-men and singing-women that could sing Artificial lamentations to provoke men to weeping. 2 *Chron.* 35.25. *Job* 3.8. *Eccles.* 12.5. Their miseries here should be so great that they could not sufficiently bewail them themselves, and therefore they should send for these to help them. The Jews of latter times borrowed such a corrupt custome of the Heathens to augment their grief at Funerals.

1 They had *Minstrels*, which with their mournful tones and sad tunes inclined the affections of the people to mourning for the dead. Of these there were two sorts, 1 Some played on Pipes. 2 Others sounded Trumpets. At the Funerals of great men they sounded *Trumpets*, and at the Funerals of inferiour persons they sounded *Pipes*. Hence we read that when Jesus raised *Jairus* his daughter, he cast out the Minstrels, *Mat.* 9.23. *Mark* 5.38.

Cantabat maestis tibia funeribus. Ovid. Fastor. l. 6.

2 The women especially that had an art in mourning, and skill in making exquisite lamentation, were hired at Burials for the same purpose, where going along with the Corps by outward significations of their sorrow both by voice and gesture, they moved the company more strongly to mourning and to sympathize with them. These the *Romans* called *praeficas*,

See in Mr. Caryl on *Job* 3.8.

ficus, quasi in hoc ipsum præfectæ, chief or skilful mourners. These had *venales lachrymas*, they made a trade of their tears, making a greater howling and noise than real mourners did, as *Horace* testifies. From the Heathen this custome came to *Rome* also, where for money, the vilest of men shall have out-side mourners more than a good many. All kinde of hypocrisie is odious to God, but this is gross hypocrisie to make a great howling when there is no reality. It is only *vox, clamor, ululatus, & præterea nihil.* The Prophet therefore doth not approve of these hypocritical howlings, and artificial lamentations to get money, but onely shews that their sorrow should bee so great that it should need helpe to express it.

Ut qui conducti plorant in funere, dicunt Et faciunt prope plura dolentibus ex animo. Horat. de art. Poet.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *When the word cannot mend a people, then comes judgements and ends them.*

First, God hews men down by the sword of the Spirit, *Hos.* 6.5. and then cuts them off by an enemies sword. This is Gods usual method, as hath been experienced in all ages. When men will not hearken to the voice of Gods messengers, it is a certain sign that God intends to destroy them, 1 *Sam.* 2.25. 2 *Chron.* 25.20, *Prov.* 29.1.

2 Obs. *Where sin goes before, there sorrow follows.*

We read before of this peoples Idolatry, bribery, cruelty; now comes weeping, wailing, lamentation, &c. Wicked mens mirth ends in mourning. See more on *Amos* 8.3.

Verse 17.

And in all Vineyards shall be wailing, for I will pass thorow thee, saith the Lord.

These *Israelites* boasted much that God was with them and he would never leave them who were the Covenant people. The Prophet tells them that God would abide no longer with them, but would now pass thorow them in wrath; and not only the Citizens and Husbandmen, but even the Vintners also should mourn for the spoyl that should be made among

among them. In the time of Vintage there was wont to be great mirth and jollity, *Psal.*4.7. they sung merrily, and did shout for joy, *Isa.*16.10. *Jer.*25.30. yea but their sins had marred their mirth, so that now they shall have weeping instead of singing. *In all Vineyards shall be mourning.* All had sinned, and now all shall suffer.

2 Here is the reason of their mourning, viz. *because the Lord will pass thorow them*, he will not dwell, nor abide amongst them in love and favour as they vainly fancied, but he would pass thorow them like an enemy, and execute justice on them, *Isa.*27.4. The Prophet seems to allude to the Lords passing thorow *Egypt* when he sent an Angel to smite all the first-born thereof, and thereby filled every house with wailing and lamentation, *Exod.*11.4. and 12.12. so I will pass thorow you with plagues, and will cause the destroying enemy to pass thorow all your land, saith the Lord.

Verbum transeo, cum de Deo dicitur, semper plagas & adversa denotat. Hieron.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Sin incenseth God against a people.*

And makes him pass thorow them in wrath, like lightning, doing general execution upon them, terribly, suddenly, irresistibly. But of this before on vers.6.

2 Obs. *Generality of sinnings generality of plagues.*

Citizens, Husbandmen, Vintners, all had sinned, and now weeping and wailing shall be amongst them all. But of this see *Amos* 6.vit.

Verse 18.

Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord, to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light.

WE are now come to the third part of this Chapter, where the Prophet inveyes against two sorts of sinners. The first are mockers and deriders of the Prophets threatnings. The second are such ensnared in their Ceremonies and Sacrifices; Vers.21,22,23.

In the precedent Verse the Prophet had told them, that the

Lord

Lord would pass thorow them in wrath, these impudent sinners in a taunting, sarcastical way ask the Prophet when this would be, *q.d. You Prophets tell us of a dark and dismal day, a day of wrath and trouble which will come upon us; but we see nothing comes; if God be in earnest in him make speed and come when he will, we fear neither him nor his threatnings; nor do we believe that ever such a day will come, or if it do come, yet it will not be such a dreadful day as you speak of; for God will not forsake his people which he hath spared so long from destruction.*

Thus these desperate Atheists being wholly drowned in security, sensuality, and carnal delights, scoff at the Threatnings, and jest at Gods judgements, neither fearing the one, nor expecting the other, but esteeming the words of the Prophet as wind, and his comminations as a vain mockery.

To these Flouters at the Threatnings and mockers at the Lords long-suffering, the Prophet answers, *Wo to you that desire the day of the Lord*, it will come too soon upon you without wishing for; did you but know the terror of it, you would never desire it. *To what end is it for you thus to speak?* Did you but know what kinde of day it is that is hasting on you, you would not so much desire it, you will think it comes too soon when it comes (the Devils thought so, *Matth.* 8. 29.) when God comes he will come as an armed enemy against you to your utter destruction; so that you have great cause to fear, and by repentance to prevent, rather than to desire that day; yet these hypocrites either as conceited of their own innocency, and confiding in their priviledges, desired this day or else in mockery and scorn, they cry, When will that day come, which *Amos* so much talks of, we would fain see it. So you shall (saith the Prophet) time enough to your sorrow; *For it is a day of darkness, and not of light*; and therefore woe be to you that thus scoffingly desire the day of the Lord, you will finde it no jesting matter when it comes, it will be a dark and dismal day to you, though now you make your selves merry with it.

By a day of darkness here is meant, the time in which God would destroy the Kingdome of *Israel*, according as the Prophets had fore-told. *Allegorically*, and allusively this is true of the day of Judgement, it will be a day of darkness and terror to all wicked men; but *literally*, this day of darkness

and

and not of light, that is, this day of exceeding darknes (as the Hebrew *Idiom* imports) as we may see *Amos* 9.4. *I will set mine eye upon them for evil, and not for good.* The denial of the contrary hath a great emphasis in it, *q.d.* I will bring upon them all manner of evil, but no good. So here, *It shall be a day of darknes, and not of light*; that is, it shall be a very dark and dismal day in which they shall finde no light of comfort from the Lord, but wrath shall come upon them to the utmost. In that day the Lord will exert his power in executing his vengeance on the Kingdome of *Israel* for all their Idolatry, Apostacy, Security, Hypocrisie, &c. The various and inevitable calamities of this day, are elegantly set forth in the next verse, where the Prophet shews how the judgements of God should beset them round, so that if they escaped from one evil, yet another should apprehend them, and if they fled from a Lion, yet a Bear (which is more savage) should devour them.

It is usual in Scripture to call *a day of Adversity*, misery and distress, by the name of *Darknes*, as *Job* 20.16. and 23. 17. and 30.26. *Isa.* 5.30. and 21.12. *Joel* 2.2. *Zeph.* 1.14. to 18. Hence the doleful condition of the damned is called utter darknes. As *light* signifies prosperity, joy and comfort, *Hest.* 8.16. *Job* 18.6. and 38.15. *Psal.* 97.11. and 112.4. So *darknes* signifies calamity and sorrow, as I have shewed on *Amos* 8.9.

Quest. *But why doth the Prophet denounce a Woe against those that desire the day of the Lord, when it is the earnest desire of the Saints in Scripture that the day of the Lord would come, and they daily pray,* Thy Kingdome come, *and it is made a kinde of a Periphrasis of a beleever, that he is one that longs for the day of the Lord,* 2 Tim. 4.8.

Answ. We must distinguish, 1 Of dayes; 2 Of persons. 1 There is a double day of Judgement; 1 There is a day of temporal judgement when the Lord ariseth to execute judgement upon the heads of incorrigible sinners, such as the old world, *Sodom*, *Jerusalem*; and these dayes have in them a glimpse and shadow of that great day of the Lord, and therefore they are called a day of blacknes, and darknes, a great and terrible day which none can abide, when the earth shall tremble, and the Sun and Moon be dark, and the

Stars withdraw their light, *Joel* 2.2, 10, 11. All these hyperbolical termes set forth the dreadful desolation which should fall upon the wicked in this life. But this is not that day which the Saints desire.

The day which the godly so much desire and long for is, that great and general day of Judgement, that day of their full Redemption when they shall enjoy both in body and soul full communion with Christ their head.

2 We must distinguish of *persons*, some are beleevers and some are unbeleevers, and hypocrites, the Prophet speaks not here of beleevers, but of self-conceited hypocrites, who being puft up with high conceits of their own innocency, & thoughts that God would acquit them, though the Prophets condemned them, they conceited that would God deal more gently with them, than those harsh, plain-dealing Prophets, and would not judge them so bad as they had reported them to be. But *woe and alas to you that thus desire the day of the Lord*! for if our day be terrible, how terrible will the day of the Lord be? if you cannot bear our words, how will you endure his heavy hands? you think us Lions, and therefore you flye from our day; but the day of the Lord will be as a Bear, which will tear and torment you worse.

The summe of all is this, *Woe to you incredulous and secure sinners, that mock at the tidings of the dark and dismal day which is coming on you, scornfully asking when will it come? assure your selves it will come soon enough to your sorrow: you shall finde that it is not a day of mirth and pleasure, but of anguish and trouble, when you shall flye from one danger, and run into another, as if one should flye from a Lion, and a Bear should meet him.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *In all ages there have been some prophane mockers and derideers of Gods judgements.*

Thus it was in the Prophets times, when they told the wicked of the burden of the Lord, that is of Gods wrath which should light upon them in some heavy judgements for their sins, *Isa* 13.1. and 22.1. they usually mocked them for their pains, saying, What is the burden of the Lord, and when will it come? you have often told us of it, but as we do not feel it, so we do not beleeve it, and therefore hee it make haste that we may see it. So those *Isa.* 5.19. *Jer.* 17.15. The Prophet

ther tells them of a night of misery that was coming on them, but those accursed Edomites taunting ly ask, Watchman, what of the night? Isa.21.11,12. *q.d. You talk much of a night of horror and desolation, of war and confusion, but when will it come? Oh saith the Prophet, the morning comes, and also the night; you have had a morning of prosperity, assure your selves you shall also have a night of adversity; and therefore if you will enquire of the Lord by me his Watchman, do it seriously, and not sarcastically, return, and come to God with speed.*

Thus some conceive that the Prophet recites the scoffes of prophane ones, when he sayes, *Precept must be upon precept, and line upon line. Tsaf lasaph, Kaf lakaf*, the very tone and sound of the words carrieth a jeer in them, *Isa.28.10. Peter* and *Jude* both foretell us, what we have found too true in our own dayes, *That in the last dayes there should be mockers, which should walk after their own ungodly lusts*, 2 Pet. 3,3,4. Jude 18. Of old they mocked at the particular dayes of judgement which the Prophets threatned them withal, but in the last dayes they will mock at the general day of Judgement, saying, *where is the promise of his coming? since the Fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the world.* Because judgement is not presently executed on the heads of wicked men, therefore they set their mouths against heaven, and blaspheme the most High.

Against mockers, see Mr. *Jenkin* on *Jude* 18. and Mr. *Cawdry* his Ser. on *Prov.*29.8. preached before the House of Com.1643.

Obs. *God will not bear with jeerers.*

When sinners are come to that height of impudency and prophaneness, that they jeer at Judgements, and mock at Gods Messengers, then shall their bonds be made strong, and their sorrows multiplied, *Isa.*28.14,15,16,17.22. 2 *Chron.* 36.16. *Prov.*3.3,4. *Jer.*23.33,34. *Ezek.*7.5,6. and 12.22. to 28. The day of the Lord, especially that last day will be a dreadful, and a dismal day to such; they will not be able then to stand in the Judgement, *Psal.*1.5. and therefore the Apostle asks, *Where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?* 1 Pet. 4.18. the Apostles interrogation is not dubitative, but assertive, they shall appear no where with comfort, nor with confidence, especially in three dayes.

1. In a day of *publick calamity*, when Sword, Plague, Famine comes, then the hearts of the wicked shall fail, when they shall howl upon their beds for the loss of their creature-

comforts, and ſhall have a trembling heart, failing eyes, and ſorrow of minde, *Deut.* 28.65. As the righteous that prepare for troubles, ſhall rejoyce in the midſt of them, *Job* 5.20. *Hab.* 3.17. ſo the wicked ſhall be overwhelmed with amazement and horrour, and ſhall rage like wilde Bulls in a net, *Iſa.* 51.20.

ὁ θάνατος πάντων τῶν φοβερῶν φοβερώτατον. *Ariſtot.*

2 The day of death is a diſmal day to the wicked; even *the King of Terrours*, Job 18.14. the moſt terrible of all terribles ſaid *Ariſtotle* when he came to dye. The thoughts of it will make a *Belſhazzars* knees to knock one againſt another for fear.

3 But ſpecially that great day of the Lord, when he ſhall come as a Thief in the night, ſuddenly, terribly, and unexpectedly upon the wicked of the world, 1 *Theſſ.* 5.2,3. 2 *Pet.* 3.10. that will be a dark and terrible day to them, when even the Kings and Captains of the earth ſhall cry to hills and mountains to hide them, *Rev.* 6.16,17.

Where then will thoſe blaſphemers of our time appear that ſcoff at Gods Threatnings, and deſire their own damnation, which the Devils themſelves dare not do, for *they believe and tremble?* Who are theſe that provoke the Lord to anger? are they ſtronger than he? who can abide his wrath, or the thunder of his power? *Job* 26.14. Shall the whelp challenge the Lion, the clay its Potter, or the creature its Creator? *Let the potſherds ſtrive with the potſherds of the earth, but wo to him that ſtriveth with his Maker*, Iſa. 45.9. To ſuch as theſe the day of the Lord will be *darkneſs, and not light*, i.e. ful of perplexity and miſery, leaving them void of comfort or counſel.

Tant reprobi, & voluptatum ſuarum deſideria multa iniquitate conſumant, atque ex temporalia flagella non ſentiant; quia æterna eos ſupplicia expectent. Aug. in Pſal. 93.20.

Verse 19.

As if a man did flye from a Lion, and a Bear met him, or went into the houſe, and leaned his hand upon the wall, and a Serpent bit him.

THis people ſtill dreamed of impunity, and becauſe the Lord bare long with them, therefore they concluded he would never come; or if he did, they would ſhift for themſelves, and if troubles were in one place they would flye to

another; but the Prophet tells them, that these shifts would not avail them in the day of Gods wrath, for all places should be full of snares and dangers, so that there should be no safety at home or abroad; for God would multiply evils upon them. So that if they escaped one, yet another should apprehend them; as if a man being in the Field or Wood should flye from a Lion, and a furious Bear should meet him, or flying from a Bear, a Serpent should bite him. It is a kinde of *Gradation*, where the speech riseth, and the Prophet shews that if they escaped one evil, yet they should fall into a worse. To have a Lion pursue a man is very dangerous, but to fall into the mouth of an hungry Bear that is worse, but to escape both, and flying into an house for shelter and succour, and laying his hand upon the wall to ease and uphold himself, to have a Serpent sting him there where he looked for most security, this is worst of all. The Lion is a more noble, generous creature, it spares a yeelding prey, and seizeth not on dead carkasses; but the Bear spares none, no not the dead. The two and forty children which mocked *Elisha* were torn in peeces, not by Lions, but by two Shee-bears, 2 *King.* 2. 24. which are more savage and cruel. Hence comes the Proverb, *Leonem fugiens incidit in Ursum*, he fled from a Lion, and fell into the mouth of a Bear, that is, he fled from one danger, and fell into a worse. There is no creature more fierce and fell than a Bear, especially when she is robbed of her Whelps, and therefore when the Lord threatens to come against *Ephraim* in a dreadful manner, he tells them he will come against them as a strong Lion, as a subtil Leopard, yea as a raging Bear that is *robbed of her whelps*, Hos. 13. 7, 8. The like expressions are frequent in Scripture, 2 *Sam.* 17. 8. *Prov.* 17. 12. *Lam.* 3. 10. These hypocrites conceited that changes would ease them, if the *Lion* were but dead, oh then they should be quiet. No (saith the Prophet) a Bear shall meet you. Oh but if the Bear were but dead, then we should have rest, no (saith the Prophet) a Serpent shall bite you. These are a proverbial kinde of speech, by which is set forth the great danger which should encompass *Israel*, no place should be free, but they should be set round, so that when they thought to flye from one trouble, they should fall into a worse; and whilst they shunned the *Scylla* of one calamity, they should fall

Corpora magna animo satis est prostrasse leoni. At lupus & turpes instant morientibus ursi, Ovid. Trist. l. 3. Eleg. 4.

Ursus leone truculentior, etsi non fortior; leo enim parcit prostratis, ursus etiam in cadavera savit. Rivet.

Ne putetis quicquam fore levationis etiamsi centies volvatur mundus, & mutetur temporis conditio. Calvin.

Incidit in Scyllam cupiens vitare Charybdim. Prov.

fall into the *Charybdis* of another. If they went abroad, there were Lions and Bears to devour them; if they staid at home, there were Serpents and Snakes that lay lurking in holes and walls that should bite them, and sting them to death. Thus when the day of the Lord should come, they should not be able to escape, but flying from one cruel enemy, they should fall into the hands of a worse, one misery should follow in the neck of another until they were quite consumed.

By a *Lion* here some understand *Tiglathpileser* King of *Assyria*, who formerly oppressed *Israel*, and by a *Bear*, *Salmanasser* a latter King of *Assyria*, which dealt more sharply and severely with *Israel*, and who at last proved a stinging *Serpent* to them, when he besieged and ransacked *Samaria*, and took all *Israel* captive. To this some conceive the Prophet *Hosea* alludes, *Hos.* 13.7,8. The Lord had been as a tender Nurse unto this people, he brought them out of *Egypt* into *Canaan*, chose them for his own peculiar above all the people of the world, and gave them the dews of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, as you may see, *Deut.* 32.10. to 15. but they abusing those mercies to the dishonour of that God that gave them, he now resolves to meet them no more like a Father to indulge them, but like a *Lion* to tear them, like a *Bear* to devour them, and like a *Serpent* to sting them to death.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *There is no escaping when God pursues.* Neither fields nor houses can shelter us if he be against us. Let men flye up to heaven, or dig into hell, or hide themselves in the bottome of the sea, yet there Gods eye doth see them, and his hand will finde them out; as I have shewed at large on *Amos* 9.2,3,4. Let *Jonah* flye to sea, and God will meet him there with a tempest, *Jonah* 1.3,4. If men escape the paw of the Lion, yet the Bear and the Serpent shall meet them. God wants not rods to chastise a disobedient people. He hath variety in store, and if one will not do, another shall. He will send evil upon evil, loss upon loss, and enemy upon enemy, until he hath quite destroyed us. Neither swiftness, strength, nor courage can save us in a day of wrath, *Amos* 2.

14,

14,15,16. Let men flye from an iron bow, yea a bow of steel shall smite them thorow, *Job* 20,24. and if they get out of a *pit*, they shall fall into a *snare* that shall hold them fast, *Isa.* 24.17, 18. *Jer.* 48.44. and if they flye seven wayes, yea seven hundred wayes before their enemies; yet they shall not escape; for God will send a Sword as many wayes after them, and if they escape one danger, yet another shall arrest them, *Deut.* 28.25. Wicked men think to escape by shifting, *e.g.* when they be in trouble of conscience then they desire to dye, thinking thereby to free themselves from misery, by running into eternal misery. So when Godsministers by the preaching of the word do startle people, they think that God would deal more gently with them, and therefore they appeal to him; now what is this but to flye out of the smoak into the fire, and to avoid a lesser, to run into a greater mischief?

Verse 20.

Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?

The Prophet having shewed this people the terrour, and unavoidableness of that great day of the Lord which was coming upon them for their sin, concludes all with this sharp and sacred Epiphonema, *Is not the day of the Lord darkness, and not light?*

The Interrogation is a strong Affirmation, *q.d. To what end do you desire this dreadful day of the Lord? Do you not know that it will be a dark and dismal day, when you shall lose your lives and liberties, your goods and your relations? when your joy shall be turned into sorrow, your prosperity into adversity, and your light into the shadow of death. It is not therefore for such obstinate sinners as you, to think that the day of the Lord should ever yeeld you any light or comfort, for the Lord will come as an armed enemy against you, who have been so long open enemies to him.*

2 To assure them of the truth of what he spake, he doubles it, saying, *It shall be a day of darkness, even very dark, q.d.* Take it for a most certain truth, that you shal have all sorts and degrees of darkness amongst you, you shall have outward and in-

inward, corporal and spiritual darkness and misery. See more vers. 18.

Epitasis est in affirmatione cum negatione contrarii.

3 To make the words more weighty and emphatical, there is added a denial of the contrary to the Affirmation, which is an usual Hebraism, and intends the speech. So *Isa.* 38.1. *Thou shalt dye, and not live*, *i.e.* thou shalt surely dye. So *Ezek.* 18.21. *He shall live, and not dye*, *i.e.* he shall surely live. So *Joh.* 1.20. he confessed and denied not, *i.e.* he plainly and openly confessed that he was not the Christ; so it shall be a *day of darkness, and no light*, or brightness in it, that is, it shall be a very calamitous day, which will bring with it many evils, but no good; much sorrow, but no joy; much darkness, but no light of comfort, ease, direction, or good counsel.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *A dark and doleful day will certainly and suddenly seize upon secure and obdurate sinners.*

Therefore the Prophet doubles and trebles it, saying, *The day of the Lord will be darkness, and not light*; then he asks the question, and doubles the Interrogation, and all to assure them of the truth of what he spake, and to hasten their Repentance. The darkness of sin brought upon them darkness of sorrow, and provoked the Lord to take away his corn and wine, and oyl, and to strip them naked, as in the day when they were born. Since they would not serve him with gladness of heart in the abundance of all things; now they should serve the *Assyrian* in woe and misery, and in the want of all things, *Deut.* 28.47,48.

A good man if he fall into trouble, yet he riseth again, but the wicked shall fall, and never rise more, *Prov.* 24.16. If a good man sit in darkness, yet the Lord will be a light unto him, *Psal.* 97.11. *Micah* 7.8. and turn all to his good in the conclusion. As the wicked man *in the fulness of his sufficiency is in straits*, Job 20.22. So the good man in the fulness of straits hath an All-sufficiency of comfort, so that he cannot but say, the Lord hath done all things well, and it is good for him that ever the Lord afflicted him; yea that great and terrible day of the Lord, when Christ shall come in his glory to judge

judge the world, shall be a day of joy and refreshing to all the Saints, *Ps.* 98.4. to 9. *Luke* 21.28. But to the wicked, who have Christ the Judge for their enemy, how dark and dreadful will all his dayes of Judgement be? When he shall lay his Vindictive hand upon them here, how full of despondency and despair will they be, when they shall be totally forsaken of all their hopes and comforts? So that if they look *upward*, God is against them; if *downward*, Hell and the Grave wait for them; if *inward*, a guilty Conscience accuseth them; if *outward*, all the Creatures are ready as so many Serjeants to arrest them, on the behalf of their Lord and Master. Thus wee see how the Day of the Lord will be darkness, and no light nor brightness in it to the wicked.

VERSE 21, 22, 23.

I hate and despise your feast-dayes, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies.

Though yee offer me Burnt-offerings, and your Meat-offerings, I will not accept them, neither will I regard the Peace-offerings of your fat beasts.

Take thou away from me the noyse of thy Songs, for I will not hear the melody of thy Viols.

WEE are now come to the Fourth and last part of this Chapter, which contains,

1 A Reproof. 2. A Commination of these hypocritical *Israelites*, who confided in their Services, and Sacrifices, in their Festivals and Songs, conceiting that the bare performance of those external Rites (though separated from internal obedience) were highly pleasing unto God; and that he would never destroy a People that served him as they did. This their folly the Prophet confutes in the following Verses, where he tells them, that all their services were odious unto God, and so farre from appeasing him, that they incensed him the more against them; and that because they were unsound

For { Man. Matter. Manner.

1 The *Sacrificers* were grand Apostates and Idolaters. They rested in the work done, and in their Ceremonious observances, and bodily worship, devoyd of all faith or true obedience, and so became abominable to God.

2 They failed in the *Manner* of their Worship, it was not of Divine institution, but of their owne invention, and therefore it is so oft Emphatically called, *your*. I hate *your feasts*. They went directly contrary to Gods command, for he commanded them to worship at *Jerusalem*, in his Temple there, but they left the Temple, and went a whoring after Calves and Idols at *Bethel*, *Gilgal*, *Dan*, and *Beersheba*. Thus they changed the place of Gods Worship, 1 *King*. 12. 29. then they changed the *time*, vers. 31. and the *Priests*, vers. 31, 32. no wonder then if God reject their services.

3 They failed in the *Manner*, they should have performed all these duties singly and sincerely, in obedience to Gods command, but they meerly sought themselves in all they did, hypocritically resting in their external observations of Feasts and Sacrifices, of Songs and Musick in their Temples, thinking by this means to expiate their sins. In this Verse therefore we have a Prolepsis, or preventing and anticipating of an Objection, whereas they boasted that they were the people of God, and did service to him. To this the Prophet brings in the Lord, saying, I hate and abhor your Services, since they come from such wicked persons, who are my profest enemies, and what you doe, hath no foundation in my Word, but is a meer will-worship of your owne inventing.

In this and the two next Verses we have,

1 The particulars of their worship, they had
- 1 Feastivals, as
  - Sabbaths.
  - New-Moons.
  - Solemn Assemblies.
- 2 Sacrifices, as
  - Burnt-offerings.
  - Meat-offerings.
  - Peace-offerings.
- 3 Singing,
  - 1 Vocal.
  - 2 Instrumental.

2 Here

2 Here is Gods abhorrency of all these Services, expreſt in variety of words, as
1 I hate them.
2 I abhor them.
3 I will not ſmel them.
4 I will not accept them.
5 I will not regard them.
6 Away with them.

3 Here is the reason of this abhorrency, and that is because they are,
1 Your Feasts.
2 Your Sacrifices.
3 Your Songs.

They are none of mine, either for matter or manner, but they are of your owne inventing and appointing, and therefore I abhor them.

I hate, I deſpiſe your Feaſt-dayes; or, I hate and reject your Feastivals with much diſdain, as vile and contemptible things, you think you highly pleaſe me with them, and think to pacifie me by them, but your thoughts and mine differ much, for I tell you plainly, I hate and abhor both your persons and performances; till you mend your manners, and execute Juſtice and Righteouſneſs in the earth, all you doe is odious to me, and I look upon it with the greateſt diſplicency imaginable; you think that I ſhould delight in your ſolemnities as you doe, but my ſtomack loathes them, and turns at every diſh and duty. The Stomack cloſeth with wholſome food and turns to it, but that which is unwholſome the ſtomack turns at the very ſight and ſent of it. When people feaſt ſincerely, God uſeth (in a ſenſe) to feaſt with them, and their wine cheers him, *Judg.* 9. 13. it is an hyperbolical ſpeech, and imports, that God is delighted with the ſacrifices of his Servants, and highly approves of their obedience in them. But the hypocriſie of theſe *Iſraelites*, like Coloquintida in the pot, ſpoyled their feaſts, and made the Lord to loathe them, as we doe meat which is burthenſome to the ſtomack, which makes us ſick till we have rid our ſtomacks of it; as Chriſt threatned to doe with luke-warm *Laodicea*, Rev. 3. 16. *I hate, I deſpiſe*, the doubling of the word is emphatical, and ſhewes the greatneſs of Gods indignation againſt them for their hypocriſie, for of all ſins God moſt abhors that, as being moſt directly oppoſite to his Nature, who is a God of Truth and Righteouſneſs. I hate your feaſts, or feaſtival Sacrifices, the word which

Mihi, contempſit, reputit cum faſtidio tanquam vile & contemptum quid.

Reprobavi feſtivitates veſtras. Chald. Paraph.

which we render *Feasts*, signifies both a Feast, and the Sacrifices which were offered on those Feast-dayes. Hence some render it, *I hate your sacrifices*, so the word is used, *Exod.* 23. 18. *Ps.* 118. 27. *Isa.* 29. 1. *The fat of my feast*, i. e. of the Lambe which was sacrifized at my Feast, *shall not be kept untill the morning*; so that it imports, that God hated both the feastivals, and the sacrifices which they offered at those feasts.

Chaggechen, festivitates vestras, à chagag, saltare, festum celebrare, hinc chag, dies festus, & locus in quo homines edunt, bibunt & saltant, & synecdochicè hostia quæ die festo offerebatur.

But our reading is good, I hate your Feasts, for the despising of their Sacrifices follows in the next verse. The *Jewes* had many Feasts, they had Sabbaths, New Moons, the Feast of Tabernacles, Pentecost, Trumpets, and the Jubilee. But the Lord tells them, *That he will not smell in their solemn assemblies.* It is a Meiosis, q. d. I greatly loathe them; meet as oft as you will, but I will not meet you there, nor once smell in your assemblies. To smell a sweet savour, signifies Gods favourable acceptation and approbation; thus when *Noah* offered a Burnt-offering to the Lord, it is said, the Lord smelt a sweet savour which pleased him well, *Gen.* 8. 21. so *Levit.* 26. 31.

In diebus interdicti vestris. Heb.

I will not smell in your dayes of restraint or prohibition, so the words are in the fountain; that is, I delight not in your Feastival dayes, wherein people are restrained and prohibited their ordinary labours, *Levit.* 23. 7, 8, 36. *Joel* 1. 14. when they offered sacrifice in a right manner, then God esteemed them as a sweet smelling sacrifice, *Exod.* 29. 18. *Levit.* 1. 9, 13, 17. *Ezek.* 20. 40. they were very grateful and acceptable to him, being types of Christ, in whom he is well pleased. The burning of the Sacrifice in it self yeelded no such sweet smell, but the faith and obedience of the person being in Christ, this made it so delightful to God.

W. Moses unvailed. l. 29. p. 108.

Non ex opere operato, nec ex opere operantis, non ex merito offerentis, nec ex merito operis, sed ex solo merito Christi gratum.

The people when they brought their Offerings, they brought Frankincense with them, to burn for a sweet savour to the Lord, *Exod.* 30. 34. *Levit.* 2. 1, 2. & 16. 12. *Numb.* 16. 14. *Deut.* 33. 10. *Psal.* 66. 15. *Ezek.* 16. 18. the better to represent the sweet odours of our Saviours Sacrifice, *Ephes.* 5. 2. But these Formalists resting in the bare doing of the work without faith and obedience, their sweetest incense was as noysome dung in the nostrils of God, *Isa.* 1. 13. *Mal.* 2. 3. this may be more truly said of all Popish Incensing in their Idolatrous Mass.

Obj.

Obj. *But did not the Lord institute and appoint Sacrifices, how then is he said to hate them?*

A. It is true, the Lord for good ends did command them, as 1. To keep up the publick assemblies of the faithful in their meetings to serve the Lord, which else would quickly have decayed. 2. To mind them of Christ and his Sacrifice, of which these were shadows. 3. Hereby they made an open confession of their faith to the world, testifying what God they served, and in whom they beleeved. 4. Hereby they testified their thankfulness for mercies received. 5. They served for the maintenance of the Ministery, and by consequence to further the Worship of God, 1 *Cor.* 9. 13.

See *Binchius* Mellif. Theolog. Part 3. p. 23, &c.

The Lord therefore doth not simply condemn Sacrifices, and religious services, but the formal and hypocritical performance of them, when men fail both in man, matter, and manner, as these did. So that when the Scripture seems to condemn Sacrifices, and sayes, *I require not Sacrifices*; this must not be taken *Absolutely*, but *comparatively*, q. d. It is not so much the outward sacrifice, as the sacrifice of an humble and contrite heart which God requires, *Psal.* 51. 16, 17. so *Matth.* 9. 13. *I will have mercy and not sacrifice*, i. e. mercy rather than sacrifice. God requires both inward and outward obedience; but that which he chiefly delights in, is the inward.

Loquitur non ἁπλῶς, *sed* κατά τι, *& secundum quid.* See Dr. *Gouge* on Heb. 10. 5. ff. 16 p. 434. & M. *Patrick* on Micah 6. 8. See my School of Guard, Rule 32

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *External Sacrifices, and Services separated from internal obedience, are odious to God.*

Many think they highly please him by such hypocritical, outside services, when they never more displease him. Of the hypocritical *Jewes* (who did yet partake of the Sacraments) it is said, that with many of them God was not well pleased, *i. e.* he was highly displeased. It is a Meiosis, 1 *Cor.* 10. 5. Circumcision without obedience, is uncircumcision, *Rom.* 2. 25, 26.

Hypocrita quasi sub Ajacis clypeo occultans sua scelera, sub suis Caeremoniis. Calvin.

There is scarce any sin in all the Scripture that hath harder terms given it than this. See *Isa.* 1. 11. to 16. & 57. 6. & 58. 2. &c. *Prov.* 7. 14, 15. *Jer.* 6. 20. & 7. 8, 9, 10, 11. & 11. 15. *Ezek.* 20. 28, 39. *Hos.* 8. 13. *Micah* 6. 6, 7, 8. *Mal.* 1. 10. see what an heap of disliking expressions are here.

See D. *Bolton* on Isa. 58. 2. p. 16. folio.

1 To what purpose are your Sacrifices?
2 I delight not in them.
3 Who required them at your hands?
4 Bring no more vain Oblations.
5 They are an abomination to me.
6 Your Feastivals I cannot away with.
7 They are iniquity.
8 My soul hates them.
9 They are a trouble to me.
10 I am weary of them.
11 I will hide mine eyes from you.
12 I will not hear your Prayers.

See more before on Amos 4. 4. & 5. 5. and in my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 5.

All their Sacrifices were as the offering of a Dogge, or a Swine, in Sacrifice, which had been a hainous crime in the time of the Law; yea the Lord accounts it as Idolatry and Murder, *Isa.* 66. 3. It is to no purpose for *Israel* to cry, My God we know thee, unless they doe the thing that is good, *Hos.* 8. 2, 3. The Scribes and Pharisees went farre in externals. Hence we read of the strict, accurat, exquisite Sect of the Pharisees, *Acts* 26. 5. but our righteousness must exceed theirs. It is obedience that God preferres before all the Sacrifices in the world, *Psal.* 50. 8, 9, 14, 25. & 51. 16, 17. hence *Samuel* tells *Saul*, that obedience is better than sacrifice, 1 *Sam.* 15. 22. it is more Spiritual, and so more pleasing to God. A wicked man may sacrifice a Beast, but a good man offers himself in sacrifice, *Rom.* 12. 1. now the more difficult the service, the more acceptable it is to God, and all good men. A zealous *David* loves not cheap, out side services, he will not offer to his God of that which cost him nothing; the service which God delights in, is spiritual service, *Joh.* 4. 23, 24. and this Gods servants delight to give him, *Rom.* 1. 9. As they desire that God should not put them off with shewes and shadowes, and shelles of duties; so they desire not to serve him by halves, but to doe what they doe for him, and to him, with all their hearts, and with all their might. *Luther* was wont to say, that God preferred Adverbs before Adjectives, and loved *bene* better

See this Point fully and learnedly proved, by Mr. *Patrick* on Micah 6. 8. p. 98. to 131. and in his Jewish Hypoc. ch. 16 p. 247.

Noli extrinsecus pecus, aurum, arietem quærere, habes in te quod occidas. Si te excelsum fecerit, longinquabitur à te, si te humiliaverit, propinquabit ad te. Aug. Adverbia apud Deum prævalent verbis, ut in naturalibus forma est dignior materia; sic in moralibus pars commendatur modus, quàm actio. Luther.

better than *bonum*; he looks to the manner as well as the matter of our services. This may convince any sober man, that the *Popish Religion* is a false religion, because it is such a Ceremonious, out-side religion; all for Bowing, Ringing, Singing, Saying, Knocking, and the traditions of men: and in these outside performances they exceed the godly; as an Harlot in painting and outward attire may excel an honest Woman; but the Kings Daughter hath an internal excellency, she is all glorious within, being adorned with all the graces of the Spirit, *Psal.* 45. 13.

VERSE 22.

Though ye offer me Burnt-offerings, and your Meat-offerings, I will not accept them, neither will I regard the Peace-offerings of your fat beasts.

THis people confided much in their hypocritical Services, and multiplicity of Burnt-offerings, Meat-offerings, Peace-offerings, &c. they thought by the bare performance of these duties to pacifie Gods wrath against them for their sins. The Prophet therefore goes on still to convince them of this their folly, and tells them plainly, that God neither regarded them, nor their Sacrifices.

In the time of the Law we read of divers Oblations and Sacrifices, amongst the rest we have three in the text, See *Binchius* Mellific. Theolog. Part 3. p. 23, &c.

1 Burnt-offerings.
2 Meat-offerings.
3 Peace-offerings.

1 The *Burnt-offering*, was one of the most excellent, and the choyest of all the Sacrifices for sin, and the most acceptable to God; it is called an *Holocaust*, or whole Burnt-offering, *Ab* ὅλος, *totus*, & καυστός, *cremandus*. *Gnolah*, *ascentio*, *elevatio*, *Holocaustum*. See *Caryl* on Job 1. 5. because it was wholly consumed by fire, there was no part reserved for the Priest, or for the People, but all was burnt and offered up to God. It hath its name from *ascending*, because by burning all in the fire, it went up in smoke and vapour. It was a daily sacrifice made by fire, *Numb.* 28. 3. *Levit.* 1. 9. *Job* 1. 5. & 42. 8. and was used both at ordinary and extraordinary Festivals. It consisted either of Fowls as

Turtles

See how it Typified Christ in D. Guild, Moses unvailed. ſſ. 32. p. 116.

Turtles and Pigeons, for the poorer ſort, *Levit.* 1. 14. or elſe of Lambs, Rams, Goats, and Bullocks, &c. for the richer ſort. The end of it was to make an atonement for Sinners, *Levit.* 1. 4.

Obj. *But the burning of a Beaſt is a poor unſavoury thing, and unfit to repreſent ſo great a mercy.*

Anſ. We muſt not look upon Gods Ordinances with carnal, but ſpiritual eyes, elſe to an eye of ſenſe, Circumciſion (which was an honourable ſeal of the Covenant) would ſeeme contemptible and diſhonourable, yea a bloody and a cruel thing, as it did to carnal *Zipporah*, Exod. 4. 25.

So in our Sacraments, how contemptible to a carnal eye, is the ſprinkling of a little water, a bit of Bread, or a ſup of Wine, but conſider them as Gods Ordinances, which he hath ordained, to ſeal and aſſure us of our reconciliation with him in the Bloud of Chriſt, and ſo they are weighty matters. A little Wax and Paper are ſmall matters to look upon, yet they may be a means to convey matters of great worth unto us.

Ainſworth on Levit. 2. 1. ſets down nine ſorts of Meat-offerings.

Minchah, proprie ſignificat munus farinaceum, & erat acceſſio victimæ. Calvin.

See *Moſes* unvailed. ſſ. 36. p. 129, &c.

See Mr. *Jackſons* Annot on Levit. 7. 15. and *Moſes* unvailed. ch. 37 p. 132.

2 *Meat-offerings, Minchah*, in a large ſenſe is taken for any gift, but here it is taken *ſtrictly* for an Oblation made of fine flower, *Levit.* 2. 1, 2. *Numb.* 6. 17. & 15. 4. & 27. 39. 2 *Chron.* 7. 7. *Ezek.* 43. 27. it was always joyned to the Burnt-offering, or daily Sacrifice; only the voluntary Meat-offering was not.

The end of it was to acknowledge, that they had all their food and proviſion from the bounty and bleſſing of God.

3 *Peace-offerings*; Theſe were Euchariſtical for Mercies received, and reſembled our ſacrifices of Praiſe and Thankſgiving, *Heb.* 13. 5.

It is called *Shelem*, becauſe this ſacrifice was offered for the peace, ſafety, and proſperity that they had already received, or ſhould hereafter receive, either generally or particularly; and this they did either voluntarily of their owne accord, or as bound by vow, *Levit.* 7. 15. 1 *Chron.* 16. 1, 2. & 2 *Chron.* 7. 7. but the other Sacrifices were neceſſary and commanded.

2 Here is Gods deteſtation of all their Sacrifices; *I will not accept them, neither will I regard them*, i. e. I abhor them; yea though yee bring the *fatteſt* of your *Beaſts*, I will not vouchſafe them a look. They were wont to feed their Oxen very

very far, that so their Sacrifices might bee the more acceptable. But the Lord tells them, that since the persons that offered them were so lewd, and lean in obedience, that he took no pleasure in such sacrifices; and therefore he bids them desist till they had mended their manners, and reformed the abuses that reigned amongst them.

But here *Bellarmine* (that great *Achilles* of the Antichristian Cause) comes in with his Sophistry, and would prove from hence the inefficacy of the Sacrifices of the Old Testament. *Bellarm. de effectu Sacram. lib. 2. cap. 14.*

But the Answer is ease. 1. Legal Sacrifices are to bee considered, either *abstractly, absolutely and simply* in themselves, and so the bloud of Bullocks and Rams could not expiate sin; But secondly, consider them *Relatively*, and *Typically*, as relaring to Christ, who was the Lambe slaine from the beginning of the world *Virtually*, though not *Actually*, Revel. 13. 8. and so they were of great weight and worth, assuring beleevers that by the Bloud of Christ all their sins were blotted out and pardoned.

2 We must distinguish of Sacrifices.

1 Some are commanded by God, and offered to him by beleevers, in a right manner, and these are highly pleasing unto God, and beneficial to beleevers; as we see in *Abel*, Heb. 11. 4. and *Levit.* 5. God never saith to the seed of *Jacob*, Seek my face in vain. The sincere services, and sacrifices of such, are a sweet smelling savour unto God.

2 There are Sacrifices which are meer Will-worship, offered up by wicked men, in a false manner, without faith; and of these *Amos* here speaks, and sayes, that their Sacrifices were odious unto God.

Now, let us see what Jesuitical and Sophistical arguing here is? 1. Because Sacrifices doe not expiate sins *per se*, therefore they doe not expiate sins *Relatively*, viz. by the merits of Christ typified by them. *Fallacia à dicto secundum quid, ad dictum simpliciter.*

2 Because God abhorres the sacrifices of wicked men, therefore he abhorres the sacrifices of all men. Now, who knowes not, that *A particulari ad Universale non valet argumentum.* Because some men are Sophisters, therefore all men are Sophisters; and because some men oppose the truth against light

(to get or keep a Cardinals Cap) *ergo* all men doe so, is a gross *Non sequitur*.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Wicked men may perform all the external duties of religion as well as good men.*

Doth the good man offer Burnt-offerings? so doe these. Doth he offer Meat-offerings, and Peace-offerings? so doe they. Yea, doe they offer the Fat? so did these. *Cain* offered Sacrifice as well as *Abel*, Gen. 4. 3. Doth the good man Fast, Pray, give Almes? &c. so did Scribes and Pharisees. Yea the Hypocrite may excel the child of God in externals, as hired mourners make a greater noyse than real ones.

See *Dyke* on the Heart, p. 29. & p. 111.

Let no man then rest in externals, and think because he barely doth such duties, therefore he is in Gods favour, all these and more may be done by a Natural man. But let us sincerely live our Prayers, and live up to our Duties and Priviledges, so shall we doe more than any Hypocrites whatsoever.

2. Obs. *The Sacrifices and Services of wicked men though never so fat, and good for matter, yet as coming from those are odious unto God.*

If the person please not, nothing pleaseth; God had no respect to *Cain*, and therefore he rejected his Offering, *Gen.* 4. 5. The Sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, *Prov.* 15. 8. & 21. 27. the tree must be good before the fruit can be good. We should therefore labour for faith and repentance that our persons may please, and then all will be pleasing. The Lord had first respect to *Abel*, and then to his Offering, *Gen.* 4. 4. Though for matter the Sacrifices may be the same, yet when they come from a believing heart, they are farre more excellent and acceptable, *Heb.* 11. 4. *By faith Abel offered a more acceptable Sacrifice than Cain.*

3 Obs. *The Services and Sacrifices which we offer unto God must be of the best.*

We must bring the finest flowre, *Levit.* 2. 1. and the fatnest of our flock, *Exod.* 29. 13. *Levit.* 3. 3. if the blind and the lame were abhorred of *Davids* soul, how much more of Gods? he curseth such as bring such maimed sacrifices to him. We

may

may not offer unto God of that which cost us nought. But as he is the best of beings, so we must give him the best of our dayes, our youth; and the best of our services, thankfully acknowledging that all our fatness, riches, comforts, and prosperity comes from God. It is said of *Promethens*, that himself did eat the flesh of his Sacrifice, but the skin and the bones he gave to *Jupiter*; even so deal too many with the Almighty, they keep the flesh and the fat to themselves, they spend their youth and health in their owne pastimes and pleasures, offering the skin and the bones of their dotage to God; If they have a Son amongst all their children that is weak and sickly, why set him to the Ministery. So in their Tythes and dues they keep the fat to themselves, and give the starvelings to their Ministers. The worst is thought too good for God, the worst Corn, the worst Calfe, the worst Lamb, &c. his Ministers shall bee sure to have, yea it may bee none at all of many.

Verse 23.

Take thou away from me the noyse of thy Songs, for I will not hear the melody of thy Vials.

THe Prophet goes on in reproving them for their hypocritical services, wherewith they thought to please and pacifie God. *Take away from me the noyse* (or multitude) *of your Songs*; they contented not themselves with a song or two, but they had their multitudes of songs. Hypocrites that delight in toys and humane inventions, and a Ceremonious, external, pompous worship, know no bounds, they spare for no cost or pains, but even tire out themselves in will-worship; morning, noon, night, midnight, all too little for Idols, but nothing for God, he is not in any of their thoughts. They placed a great part of their Religion in Singing, and Musick, and external services, they thought that God was like themselves, and would be pleased with such things as pleased them; and as Children are stilled with rattles, so they thought to pacifie God with their songs and melody.

Putabant se suae deliria hyrando tegere, & suavi concentu aures Dei irati mulcere, eumque quasi incantare. a Lapide in locum.

But away with your Songs and Musick (saith God) they are a burden to me, you doe but tire your selves and me too;

to no purpose. Doe not think to please me with the Musical harmony of your formal devotions, whilst I hear and abhor the discordous noyse of your sins and enormities.

In the time of the Ceremonial Law God did indulge the *Jewes* the use of many Musical Instruments in his Worship, which are now abolisht (as I have proved at large on *Amos* 6. 5.) Vocal and Instrumental Musick was at that time a part of Gods instituted Worship, as appears, 1 *Chron.* 25. & 2 *Chron.* 23. 18. now the ten Tribes did imitate *Judah* in their Songs, but abused them to the Worship of their Idols, and polluted them with their Impiety, Idolatry, and Hypocrisie, when they should have Worshipped God in *Sion*, they Worshipped *Baalim*, with the Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, Hence the Lord threatens to turn their musick into mourning, *Amos* 8. 3.

Hamon, strepitus, rixa, tumultus, multitudo.

Tumultum vocat, quod sine spiritu clament & ululent. Mercer.

Hic strepitum fuit Deo molestus, ut grunnitus suis, aut clamor asinorum. Hieron.

The word which we render, *Noise*, in the Original signifies a clamour, a trouble, a tumult, a multitude; which being all united make a compleat Periphrasis of a Popish Quire. It is a clamorous, troublesome, tumultuous multitude, when they meet together they make a horrid, hideous noyse, which takes with God no more than the grunting of a Swine, or the braying of an Asse, as St. *Jerome* long since hath well observed.

See more on Amos 6. 5.

Nebel est Instrumentum Musicum cujus species nobis est incognita. Calvin.

The *Viol* is here put Synecdochically for all kind of Musical Instruments, which *David* had prepared in great abundance for the praising of God; which these abused to the praise of Idols. The word *Nebel* which we render a *Viol*, is by some called a Psaltery, a Harp, an Organ; the Instrument is now out of use, and it is not certainly known what it was.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *All the singing and praises of wicked men is an abomination to the Lord.*

Away with them (saith God) they are a burden to me, your Vocal and Instrumental Musick, your Viols, Harps, and Organs, your Songs and Sonnets are in mine ears but as the howling of a Dog. Praise is not comely in the mouthes of Sinners. As for the wicked, saith God, What hast thou to doe to take

take my name into thy mouth? Christ would not be praised nor publisht by Devils. The bellowing of those Bulls of *Basan*, and roaring Stentors in the Papacy (many of them being deep in the Quire, and deeper in the Ale-house) with all their Theatrical Musick is an abomination to the Lord, his soul loathes such swill, and that one Quere, *Who hath required these things at your hands?* is enough to sweep both the workmen and their work, out of the Church of God. These are a meer *Noyse*, a Voyce, and nothing else; they draw nigh to God with their lips (scarce that) when their hearts are farre from him; yet this is the greatest part of their Worship (as *Gualter* hath well observed.) Ringing of Bells, and roaring of Organs, is a great part of Papists Divine Service.

In Papatu, Organorum concentus, & campanarum beatus, non postrema cultus Divini pars esse creditur. Gualter.

It is the musick of the Heart, and not of the Tongue that God delights in, it is this which makes us like the Angels in Heaven, when in our degree we praise that God on earth, which the Angels continually adore and praise in heaven. We should therefore be much in this duty of praising God, for though the Ceremony be vanisht, yet the substance abides still.

See more on *Amos* 6. 5.

Away then with that Histrionical and confused chaunting, which even the Learned and wiser sort of Papists have condemned, as *Aquinas*, *Alredus* an Abbot, *Cajetan*, and others, as I have proved at large on *Amos* 6. 5. At present hear what *A Lapide* the Jesuit sayes against those, *Qui inconditis & confusis vocibus tumultuarie boant & ululant. Videant cantatores ne totam Psallendi devotionem collocent in voce canora, in subtilitate modulandi, in agilitate tonos minuendi, &c. Dum instar avium minuriunt, ut curiosorum aures titillent, & ad se rapiant, ne audiant a Deo, Auser a me tumultum canticorum tuorum.*

A Lapide in Amos 5. 23.

Verse 24.

But, let judgement run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.

WEE have seen before what God did not require of this People, and that was Sacrifices without faith and obedience. 2. Wee are come to that which hee did require of them, viz. an active lively faith, shewing it self in justice and righteousness towards our neighbour; so that if they should say, Since God rejects our Services and Ceremonies, what would he have us doe? why the Prophet answers, *He hath shewed thee O man what is pleasing to him, and what he desireth of thee, viz. to doe justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.*

Interpreters vary about the sense of the words, 1. The Rabbins and those that follow them, make it a comination of Gods Judgements against *Israel* for their sins; they read it thus, *And judgement shall run down, or be revealed as waters, q. d.* Though you abound with Ceremonies and Sacrifices, and think to shroud your selves under their shadow, yet I will cause my Judgements to break in upon you like waters in abundance, and my righteous vengeance as a mighty stream shall bear down all before it, because of your Idolatry and Hypocrisie.

2 But the words are properly an exhortation to amendment of life, this people had been grosly guilty of injustice and unrighteousness, and therefore God calls upon them now to break off their unrighteousness, and to give themselves up to equity and righteousness, that their repentance might be as eminent as ever their sin had been. Let Judgement therefore run down, or *roll* down like waters, *i. e.* be alwayes ready to doe Justice and Judgement, let it abound and extend it self to all, doe not suppress it as formerly you have done, *Amos* 4. 1. & 5. 7, 12. but let it run fully and freely to every one that hath need; content not your selves with a drop or two, but get rivers of righteousness, which may *abundantly* refresh all the oppressed and needy of the Land; so much the phrase imports, as you may see, *Isa.* 48. 18. *O that thou hadst hearkened*

Figgal, volvat, a Rad. Galal, volvere, convolvere, obruere. The vulgar Latine mistaking the root, render it, *Revelabitur*; and render *Vau* by *&*, when it is oft used adversatively, (as it is here) by sed.

to

to my Commandements, then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the Sea, q. d. *Hadst thou obeyed my commands, then had thy peace been as a river, that abides and runs continually*, and *thy righteousness*, i. e. the fruits of thy righteousness, *viz.* thy prosperity and happiness should have been as the waves of the sea, which are abundant and perpetual. This sense is most genuine, and agrees best with the contexture and thread of the discourse; the former sense is Rabbinical and wrack.

3 Others distinguish between judgement and righteousness, thus.

1 By *Judgement* they understand a faithful and impartial execution of justice.

2 Under *Righteousness* they comprehend all the duties of the first and second Table, relating both to God and man. So the word righteousness is sometimes used in Scripture, as *Rom. 6. 18. Ephes. 6. 14.*

But with submission to better judgements, I conceive that Judgement and Righteousness here are Synonima's, signifying one and the same thing; and that the latter clause is exegetical and illustrates the former, as it doth frequently in the Scripture, *Let Judgement run down as waters*, what is that? why *let righteousness run down as a mighty stream*, i. e. let nothing hinder you from a constant and vigorous execution of Justice and Equity, and this execution of Justice is oft called Righteousness, *Psal. 72. 3. Acts 17. 31.*

Benachah Ethan, tanquam torrens fortis, vel fluvius vehemens.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *God delights in Justice and Righteousness more than in Sacrifices.*

I hate your Sacrifices, I abhor your feasts (saith God) but let judgement run down as waters; it is that I delight in. As obedience is better than Sacrifice, and Mercy than Burnt-offerings, *Hos. 6. 6.* so Justice and Equity (which is one branch of our obedience) is better than Sacrifice; of the two, God had rather have Justice without a Sacrifice, than Sacrifice without Justice; and therefore (saith God) Away with your songs and sacrifices, give me righteousness and obedience. It is not thousands of Rams, nor rivers of Oyl, but *doing justly*,

which

which God requires of us, *Micah 6. 8.* so *Isa. 1. 17. Learn to doe well, seek judgement, releeve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow*; without this all our religion is vain. Let men profess Angelical Sanctity, yet if they doe not what is just and righteous, all is but hypocrisie, *James 1. ult.*

2 Obs. *Rulers must abound in judgement and righteousnes*

Actio una non denominat hominem.

They must not only doe an act or two of righteousnes, for one act doth not denominate; but they must be *rivers* always running with righteousnes. This elegant Metaphor of a River may give us some hints how Justice should be executed.

Viz.
1 Openly.
2 Fully.
3 Freely.
4 Universally.
5 Constantly.
6 Zealously.

1 *Judgement* must be executed *openly*, that all may see the equity of the sentence. Rivers run openly, who so will may see them. So Courts of Justice should be open; hence the Judges of old sate in the Gates, where all might see and hear what they did.

2 *Fully*, Justice must run with a plentiful and an abundant stream. They must not confine Justice, nor imprison it, but as occasion requires they must abundantly dispense and disperse it abroad. They must not content themselves with a few drops or acts of Justice, but it must run down with a mighty stream. Goodnes is of a diffusive nature; now Justice is a singular good, and therefore should be communicated to all.

3 *Freely*, the river offers it self freely to all, who ever is athirst, may drink of it freely. Men should not be bribed and hired to doe Justice, but it should flow as freely and spontaneously from a Ruler, as water from a spring. The light of the Sun, and the liberty of the Air should not be more cheap and free, than Justice amongst us.

4 *Universally and commonly*, without respect of persons. When justice is duly administred, it must run down as waters, and streams, which run by the poor mans doors, as well as

by

by the rich; and by the poorest Cottage, as well as by the stateliest Palace.

5. *Constantly*, Rivers run continually, the stream is alwaies rowling down: so should Magistrates be constant *pro re nata*, as occasion requires in the execution of Justice, in the places of their abode.

6. *Zealously and vigorously*. A mighty stream carries down all before it: So a good Ruler breaks thorow all impediments, discouragements, and temptations that might hinder the free course of Justice. No friends nor foes, no gifts nor bribes can hinder him from a faithful discharge of the duties of his place. As we see in *Moses*, *Job*, *Samuel*, *Nehemiah*. This is Gods work, and he is cursed that doth it negligently. When men are good, it is a joy to them to do judgement, *Prov.* 21. 15. and this is the way to safety and settlement, *Isa.* 32. 16, 17, 18. *Dan.* 4. 27.

Rapido montano flumine to rens, Sternit agros, sternit sata laeta, boumq; labores. Virg. Aeneid. l 2.

See more in my Com. on Psal. 82. 4. p. 112, &c

See Mr. *Patrick* Jewish Hypoc. chap. 14. p. 226.

Verse 25.

Have yee offered unto mee sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?

THe Prophet comes now to conclude the Chapter with an Amplification of the Superstition and Idolatry which from first to last did abide in *Israel*. Their *Fore-fathers* of old were Idolaters in the wilderness, there they worshipped the golden Calf, and *Baal-Peor*, Numb. 25. 1, 2, 3. No sooner were they come to *Canaan*, but they were on their knees to *Baal* and *Ashtaroth*, Judg. 2. 13.

Yea and then their Posterity (saith the Prophet) have justified them in their Idolatries, and shewed that the evil is hereditary, and so the more to be abhorred; in that you have added Calves to Calves, and Idols to Idols, lest they should boast of their Ancestors, the Lord upbraids them with their Fore-fathers, and tells them that they were Idolaters before them, and were punisht for their Idolatry, and so should they; as they had been like them in sin, so they should be like them in suffering.

In the words we have, 1. *Israels* sin, *They sacrificed not to God*, but to Idols, as in the next verse.

2 Here is a double aggravation of their sin, both in respect of Time and Place.

1 Here is the *Time* how long they grieved the Spirit of God, not forty daies, but forty years, even the whole time of their abode in the wilderness.

2 The *Place*, it was in the Wilderness, where they lay under the Rod, and were kept under severe Discipline, and where the Lord lead them miraculously, and fed them miraculously, with Mannah from Heaven, giving them waters from the Rock, and with a mighty hand protecting them, and carrying them upon Eagles wings, above the reach of many dangers and distresses, *Amos* 3. 1, 2.

This is *locus difficillimus* (saith *Mercer*) this verse, and especially the next are two of the hardest verses in the whole Prophecy. Many doubts do here arise.

Quest. 1. *Why doth the Prophet charge this people with not offering sacrifice in the wilderness, when they never lived in the wilderness, but lived many ages after their Fore-fathers came out of the wilderness? as appears by the series of those Judges and Kings which governed them since the time that they came from* Egypt.

Answ. Though the same numerical men were not in the wilderness, yet the house of *Israel* was there, and what their Fore-fathers did, is imputed to the posterity who made up one body with them, and were bound up in the same bundle with them.

These walking in the Idolatrous steps of their Fore-fathers, justified their Idolatry, and as they worshipped the golden Calf in *Egypt*, so these worshipped the golden Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*. Thus they being heirs of their Fathers guilt, and imitators of them in their Idolatry, the Lord chargeth them here with their sin also, saying, *Have yee offered to mee sacrifices in the wilderness?* Hee doth not say, Have your Fore-fathers offered sacrifice to mee? but he chargeth them with the sin; and this is usual in Scripture, when the children walk in the Ancestors sins, to charge the children with the sins also, as *Mat.* 23. 35. Our Saviour chargeth the Jews with the blood of *Abel* and *Zacharias*, *whom they slew*. How could they slay those that were slain long before they were born?

Answ. By imitating their cruelty, they approved of the like

like cruelty in their progenitors, and so became partakers with them in their sin, and should partake with them in their plagues; not onely for the murdering of *John* the Baptist, and those of latter times; but even for the blood of all the Saints that ever was shed to that day, even from the blood of righteous *Abel*, the first that ever was slain, to the blood of good *Zacharias*, who was so barbarously slain between the Temple and the Altar, *q. d.* God will visit the sins of the Fathers upon you their children, that have walked in their wicked steps, with the greatest severity, because ye have sinned against the greatest light; and if the blood of one innocent *Abel* lay so heavy upon *Cain*, that he cried, his punishment was greater than he could bear; how sad is your condition that are charged with the blood of so many thousands of innocent, holy men! so that as all Beleevers are the children of *Abraham*, and have Interest in all the Promises that were made to him: So all persecutors are the seed of *Cain*, and have interest in all the curses which fell upon him.

Quest. 2. *How are all condemned here as Idolaters, when we read of sime good men amongst them that sacrificed to God, and not to Idols? as* Moses, Eleazer, Joshua, Caleb, Phineas, *and* Aaron, *the Saint of the Lord, as the Psalmist calls him*, Psal. 106. 16.

Answ. The Prophet condemns the body of this people *indefinitely*, and not all and every individual person, singly. He speaks against the wicked Ancestors of wicked children, and against those wicked children which walked in the steps of those wicked Ancestors; God had his remnant amongst them, and some grains of wheat in this heap of rubbish and chaff.

Quod major multitudo abrepta fuerat, ideò totus populus meritò damnatur. Calvin.

Quest. 3. *Have yee sacrificed to mee?* The Interrogation is a strong Negation. So *Joel* 1. 2. *q. d. You have not sacrificed to mee all that time, but you have discovered your averseness from mee, and your proneness to Idolatry on all occasions.* But how can this be true, when we read that the Israelites did sacrifice to God in the wilderness? when the Covenant was ratified, they offered Eucharistical sacrifices to *Jehovah*, *Exod.* 24. 4, 5. And after the dedication of the Tabernacle, and the consecration of *Aarons* sons, and at the celebration of the feast of the Passeover, *Levit.* 8, 21, 28. & 9. 2. *Numb.* 7. 3. & 9.

Answ: Though they did offer some sacrifices the first and second year that they were in the wilderness, yet after they did not so ordinarily and so frequently, as when they came to *Canaan*, for in the wilderness they lived in want, and had not that plenty of Sheep and Oxen, as they had when they came into *Canaan*. They had scarce any flesh to eat, much less to sacrifice, therefore the Lord fed them with Mannah and Quails. Besides, they were in a fleeting condition, and so unfit for sacrificing, or for circumcision, and therefore 'twas omitted in the wilderness for a time. They were not settled nor fixed, but as the Tabernacle removed, so they removed, and till they came to fix and settle, they could not so wel sacrifice.

2 The Answer lyes most genuinely in that little Emphatical word *Mee*, *Have yee offered sacrifice to mee? q. d.* 'Tis true, I grant, you have offered sacrifice (saith the Lord) but 'twas to your Idols, and to Devils, *Deut.* 32. 16, 17. and not to mee, both you and your Fathers worshipped Calves and Creatures, and the host of Heaven (as in the next verse.) and not mee, and therefore I will punish you as I did them. *Ezek.* 20. 15, 16, 18, 21. *Isa.* 43. 22, 23, 24.

'Tis true, they thought they worshipped God, and did him good service, but since they kept not to the Rule, but worshipped the Lord according to their own inventions, with rotten hearts, and unhallowed lives, therefore the Lord disowns all that they did, and tells us, that they did not sacrifice to him at all.

Quest. 4. *How is it said that for forty years space in the wilderness they did not sacrifice, whereas 'tis apparent that the two first years at least they did offer sacrifice?*

The Answer is easie; 'Tis usual in Scripture for roundness of number (though some few years may be under or over) to name a full and compleat number, as here forty years for thirty eight, that is, not forty precisely, but well nigh forty. So *Abimelech* is said to kill his seventy Brethren, when he killed but sixty nine, for *Jotham* escaped, *Judg.* 9. 5. So the seventy two Disciples are called the seventy. So *Gen.* 42. 13. it is said, *Thy servants are twelve brethren*, yet in the same verse it is said, *one is not*, By the like Synecdoche they are called twelve Apostles, when one was wanting, 1 *Cor.* 15. 5.

Scriptura plenum ac integrum numerum usurpat Synecdochicè pro parte, cum paululum quiddam aut deest, aut excedat. Aug. de Civit. Dei. l. 15. c. 24.

So

So the Lord threatned to punish *Israel* forty years in the wilderness, whereas they were not punisht forty years compleat, for the punishment began to be inflicted on them about the second year of their departure out of *Egypt*, as appears by comparing, *Numb.* 1. 1. with 14. 33. and 32. 13. See more *Deut.* 29. 5. *Judg.* 20. 46. 2 *Sam.* 5. 5.

V. Plenius D. Reynolds de lib. Apochy. Prælect. 219. *p.* 1288, &c.

See the large Annotat. on 2 Sam. 5. 5.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Teaching by Questions and Interrogations is very Emphatical and lively.*

Have yee offered sacrifice to mee? did yee serve mee? or rather, did yee not serve your selves in the wilderness? The Scripture abounds with such Questions, *Adam where art thou?* Gen. 3. 9. So said Christ, *How readest thou? what think you?* Mat. 18. 12. and 21. 28. Luke 7. 42. James 4. 5. This quickens and awakens men, it makes them heed things better, and consider what to answer. Be not then offended when Gods Ministers ransack thy soul, and question and quicken thee out of thy Lethargy, and deep security.

2. *God bears long with sinners.*

Forty years he was grieved with *Israel*, in the wilderness. He bore with those ten Tribes well nigh three hundred years before he destroyed them; He bore with the old world a hundred and twenty years; He bore with the *Amorites* four hundred years. 'Tis one of his Royal Attributes, that he is a God of infinite Patience, and Long-suffering, *Exod.* 34. 6. *Psal.* 103. 8. *Jonah* 4. 2. We have all daily experience of this his goodness to us.

See more in my Com. on Hos. 13. 12. p. 4. to 11.

3. *To sin against mercy aggravates sin.*

For this people to sin against God in the wilderness, where he led them, and fed them miraculously, and upheld them in the midst of so many dangers, doth greatly heighten their sin.

See more in my Comment. on 2 Tim. 4. 10. p. 427, 428.

4. *Long continuance in sin is very displeasing unto God.*

Hence the Lord so often mentions this forty years obstinacy of *Israel*, as that which exceedingly offended and grieved him, *Numb.* 32. 13. *Psal.* 95. 11. *Act.* 7. 42. & 13. 18. This made the Lord to complain of *Jerusalem*, Jer. 13. *ult. Oh Jerusalem, wilt thou not bee made clean? when shall it once bee?*

See more in my Com. on 2 Tim. 4. 10. p. 429.

He denounceth a woe against them for their hypocritical dallying and delaying; Woe unto thee, *wilt* thou not be made clean? 'tis not, *canst* thou not? but wilt thou not? They were wilfully impenitent; 'tis this rebellious will of men that destroyes them, *Psal.* 78. 10. *Isa.* 30. 9, 15. & 42. 24. *Jer.* 5. 3. & 6. 16. & 8. 5. & 44. 17. *Zach.* 7. 11. *Rom.* 8. 7.

Frustrà expectio quia obduristi in scelere, desperata est tua correctio, funditus ergò te evertam. Hieron.

Obj. *We will turn.*

Answ. You do but dissemble (saith God) with mee, *When shall it once bee?* what? not after so many wooings and warnings? what? not after so many years purifying Sermons? nor so many melting mercies? nor so many awakening judgements? nor after so many Sabbaths and Sacraments, fasts and feasts? will nothing cleanse thee from thy old abominations? Oh when shall it once be? This obstinate persevering and continuing in sin, makes the Lord so oft to upbraid men with it, as that which will be their bane, *Exod.* 16. 28. *Neh.* 9. 30. *Psal.* 78. 40. *Luk.* 13. 44.

5. *Children that imitate their Fore-fathers in sin, shall bee like them in punishment.*

See my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. p. 82. & 146.

God will visit the sins of the Fathers upon those children that tread in their steps, *Exod.* 20. 5. Hence the Lord so oft forbids us to follow sinful Fore-fathers, *Psal.* 78. 5, 6, 8. *Ezek.* 20. 18. *Zech.* 1. 4. And *Stephen* aggravates the sins of the Israelites, saying, *Thus as your Fathers did, so do yee,* Act. 7. 51.

6. *Idolatrous, Hypocritical service, is no service.*

Have ye offered Sacrifice to mee? (saith the Lord to those Hypocrites) no, you have not served mee at all.

1. Since you do not worship mee according to Rule, but according to your own inventions, I abhor it, and account it as null.

See my Schools Guard. Rule 22.

2. *Your hearts are rotten;* what the heart doth not, God accounts as not done, *Isa.* 43. 22, 23, 24. Though they abounded with sacrifices, yet God saith there, They brought him none, *viz.* in sincerity. As knowledge without practice is no knowledge, 1 *Sam.* 2. 12. so duties not practised are no duties in Gods esteem.

Quia non soli Deo offerebant, perinde erat ac si non offerebant. Mariana.

3. They served not *God alone*, but served him and their Idols too, and therefore God disowns all they did, as not done to him, for he will be served truly and totally, without halting

or

or halving, 1 *King.* 18. 21. 2 *King.* 17. 33. *Ezek.* 20. 30. *Zeph.* 1. 5.

Verse 26.

But yee have born the Tabernacle of your Moloch, and Chiun, your Images, the star of your god, which yee made to your selves.

THese Hypocrites were ever and anon boasting of their Sacrifices, to them the Prophet in the person of the Lord here further answers, and tels them, it is true, Your fore-fathers made a shew of serving me, carrying my Tabernacle, and all things belonging to it, in the Wildernes; but their hearts were set upon their Idols, and they Worshipped their *Moloch*, and the other Images of those Planetary gods, and not me.

This *But* spoyls all.

The better to convince them of their Idolatry, the Prophet here instanceth in three of their chief Idols,

Moloch,
Chiun, and
The Host of Heaven.

1 The Prophet instanceth in these Heathen Idols to shame *Israel.*

2 Here are the setters up of these Idols, and those are, these wicked men themselves, *which yee made to your selves.*

3 Here is their love and affection to those Idols, they bare them, and carried their Images about with them.

This is, *Locus difficilis & valde perplexus* (say Interpreters) it is a difficult, knotty, perplexed Text, I never yet met with its fellow, *Quot verba, tot mysteria*, it hath more mysteries, and various interpretations than words. I shall endeavour to clear up all.

1 Q. *The first Quere is, What is meant by* Moloch *here?*

A. Under this grand Idol are Synecdochically comprehended the rest of their Idols. This *Moloch* was an old abominable Idol, which the *Ammonites*, and other Heathens worshiped. Hence it is oft called, *the abomination of the Ammonites*, 1 King. 11. 7. & 2. King. 23. 13. in other places it is called

called *Molech*, Levit. 18. 21. and *Milcom*, 1 King. 11. 5, 33. Zeph. 1. 5. and by *Amos* and St. *Stephen* it is called *Moloch*, Acts 7. 43. they both upbraid the *Jewes* for worshipping this abominable Idol, and that in the Wilderness, where the Lord shewed them so many signal Miracles and Mercies; there they began to practise this foul Idolatry. The *Ammonites* had many gods, but one among the rest was their Patron, and tutelar god, which they called their King, *Jer.* 49. 1, 3. *Amos* 1. 15. (as they did this *Moloch*) but the Holy Ghost calls it an abomination, for that which is highly esteemed in the sight of men, is an abomination in the sight of God. This Idol not only *Ammon*, but *Israel* trusted in, as their Guide, and Leader in their travels; which shewes their horrid ingratitude in casting off God, who had been so long their Protector and their King, and now to chuse an Idol, and a *Moloch* for their God and Guide, and therefore it is emphatically called *yours*, *Your Moloch*, which you chose for your God and King. To this Idol the *Israelites* most inhumanely, and barbarously offered their Sons and Daughters in Sacrifice, *Levit.* 18. 21. & 20. 2. 2 *King.* 23. 10.

What this Idol should be, is hard to determine. 1. Some say, it was an hollow Idol shaped like a man.

2. Others make it an hollow Image made of Brass, having the face of a Bullock, and hands spread abroad like a man, that openeth his hands to receive somewhat. There were seven Chappels built for it, before which the Image was set, who so offered a Fowl or Dove, went into the first Chappel; if he brought a Lamb, he went into the second; if a Ram, into the third; if a Calf, into the fourth; if a Bullock, into the fifth; if an Oxe, into the sixt; and if he offered his Son, into the seventh, and he kissed *Moloch*; as the Sacrificers in *Hosea* kissed the Calves, *Hos.* 13. 2. The Son was set before *Moloch*, the Image having fire put under it was made burning hot, then the Priest taking the Child, put him into *Molochs* burning armes, and to the end that the father might not hear the cry of the Child, they did beat upon Tabers, whence the place was called Tophet, of *Toph*, which is a Taber.

V. Jalkut in his Heb. Com. on Jer. 7.

3 Others conceive that it was the star of their god, probably *Saturn*, the highest of the Planets, to whom the *Phenicians* sacrificed their Children, saith *Tertullian*.

V. Tertul. Apologet. c. 9.

4 Many

4 Many think it was the same Idol which we call *Baal*, to whom they sacrificed their Sons and Daughters, *Jer.* 7. 31. & 19. 5. & 32. 35.

5 And most genuinely, it is conceived that this *Moloch* whom they worshipped was the *Sun*: which is King of Planets, and chief of Stars: the most operative of them all, and fullest of splendor; which some did worship by the name of *Beel-samen*, *Lord of Heaven*; for as the Moon is called *Melachah*, the Queen of Heaven, *Jer.* 7. 18. & 44. 17, 25. So the Sun is called *Melech*, the King of Heaven; whom the *Persians* worshipped as their God.

V. Euseb. Præp. Evang. l. 1. & l. 4. c. 7.

V. Strabo Geog. lib. 15.

And Chiun your Images.

Their second Idol was *Chiun*, and here again Interpreters are divided, and though it be not much material to know what this Idol was (the sin reproved being not in the name, but in the thing, which was an abominable Idol, however called) yet 1. Some say this *Chiun* was the Idol *Hercules*, which in the *Ægyptian* Language was called *Chon*, but varied into another Language might easily make *Chiun*. St. *Luke* calls this supposed Deity, *Remphan*, Acts 7. 43. from *Repha*, which signifies a Giant, and thereupon some have thought it was *Hercules*, who was wont to be pourtraied in a Giant-like form. The Evangelist useth this name rather than *Chiun*.

V. Bera in Act. 7. 43.

1 Because he followed the Translation of the Seventy, who being appointed by *Ptolomy* King of *Ægypt* to translate the Bible, they use the *Ægyptian* name *Remphan* in their Greek Translation.

2 The name *Remphan* being better known to the *Jews* in those dayes, (who made great use of the Septuagint) than that of *Chiun*, therefore the Evangelist mentions that rather than the other.

3 Others conceive that it might be *Jove*, or *Mars*, or *Venus* especially, which Planet they worshipped as their Guide and Leader in the Wilderness; it being the Leader of the Morning, and fore-runner of the Sun, and is called Lucifer, which is said to be placed in the fore-head of *Moloch*, because it goeth before the Sun-rising. This Planet the *Sarazens* worship at this day.

4 But most genuinely it seems to be the Idol *Saturn*,

 which

which in the *Arabick*, and *Persick* Language is called *Chiun*, and *Amos* speaking of that time more especially when *Israel* wandred in the Wilderness of *Arabia*, where they committed this foul Idolatry, calls the Heathen god after the *Arabick* Language, *Chiun*, or *Chivan*. Besides, the *Ægyptians* at this day call *Saturn* in their Language, *Rephan*, or *Remphan*, as *Luke* doth.

You have born the Tabernacle of your Moloch.

Melkekem, vel vestro.

Or, you have erected a Tabernacle to him, as to your King. Some read it, you have born the Tabernacle of *Siccuth* your King, which they conceive to be the name of some Idol; indeed *Siccuth* may serve to have some affinity with *Succoth*, a Goddess of the *Babylonians*, 2 *King.* 17. 30. But the Holy Ghost which is the best interpreter of it self, by St. *Luke* (who following the Septuagint, which read it *Succoth*; not *Siccuth*) renders it a Tabernacle, and so justifies our Translation.

Τὴν σκηνὴν τοῦ Μολὸχ, Tabernaculum Moloch. Sept.

And Chiun *your Images.*

Netsatem, portâstis, i. e. amâstis, susceptistis, approbâstis. Mercer.

Here we see the love and affection of these Idolaters to their Idols, they bear them, and carry them on their shoulders (say some) by way of pomp and honour, as Idolaters are wont to doe, *Isa.* 46. 7. the Prophet speaking there of an Idol, tells us, that he is born on mens shoulders to the place where he must stand, to be seen abroad.

2 Others conceive that the Images of this Idol-god were enshrined in some little portable Tabernacles (as the Image of *Diana* had its shrines, little houses, or caskets to put it in, *Acts* 19. 24.) which the people as many of them as were given to Idolatry, carried about with them among their stuffe. So *Rachel* stole her fathers gods, and brought them with her stuffe into *Canaan*, Gen. 31. 34. As good men by Prayer take in God for their companion with them in their journeys, *Gen.* 35. 3. *Acts* 21. 5, 6. so Idolaters carry about with them their Idols, Hosts, Crucifixes, &c. for religion and protection sake, as so many tuelar gods in their voyages and journies.

3 Here is the multitude of their Idols, set forth in the Plural number, and *Chiun your Images*, which imports the great number of them, and doubles their sin. 1. They make New-gods. 2. They make Images of these New-gods in do-

now

nour of them, contrary to Gods express Command, *Exod.* 20. 4.

Or *Chiun* your Images, that is (say some) your notable Image, the plural number for the singular (as oft) especially in names of dignity.

Hence we may observe against the Papists, that the Scripture condemns not only Idols (which themselves confess unlawful) but also *Images* for religious Worship; God will not be Worshipped by any visible Picture, and therefore the Prophet condemnes both *Moloch* and *Chiun* with their Images, yea the Evangelist condemnes the very Figures of those Idols which they make to themselves, *Acts* 7. 43.

Tsalmechem, from *Tselem*, *Imagines vel figuras vestras.*

See more, Dr. *Reynolds de lib. Apocryph. Lect.* 219. & *de Idolol.* Rom. Eccles. l. 2. c. 3. Sect. 40. p. 422. & *Rivet* in Hos. 8. 4. and above all, Mr. *Durham* in his elaborate Com. on Revel. 9. p. 454.

The star of your god.

Or, the star which is your god, or rather the Images which you worship are like a Star, either like the Sun, or *Saturn*; for their gods were nothing but Planets, or Stars which they worshipped, in, or by Images representing them, *Acts* 7. 41, 43. *Figures which you made to worship them* (saith St. *Stephen*) even the Host of Heaven, as the Stars are oft called, *Deut.* 17. 3. *Psal.* 33. 6. *Isa.* 34. 4. & 45. 12. *Jer.* 33. 22. *Dan.* 4. 35.

Cocab elohechem, stellam vestrorum Deorum.

The Heathen Idolaters were great worshippers of the Host of Heaven, and this peece of Idolatry the *Jewes* had learnt from them, *Jer.* 8. 2. and with this St. *Stephen* chargeth them, *Acts* 7. 42. that they worshipped the Host of Heaven, *i. e.* Sun, Moon, and Stars, as it is written in the Book of the Prophets, *viz.* of the lesser Prophets, (of which *Amos* is one, out of which this text is quoted) all the twelve being bound together in one Book, lest they should be scattered, or lost, by reason of their smallness.

Many of the *Jews* conceited that all the Stars were Gods, and that there was some Deity in them, and therefore they worshipped them, as appears 2 *King.* 23. 11. *Jer.* 7. 18. & 8. 2. & 19. 13. & 44. 17, 19, 25. *Zeph.* 1. 5.

With the like Sin the Prophet here chargeth them, *viz.* with Idolizing the star of their god, *or the star your gods.* Hee speaks it sarcastically and tauntingly, *q. d.* see what goodly

gods yee have gotten, these are thy gods O *Israel*; Stars and Planets, Idols and Images; you have forsaken the living God for dead ones, and so have changed your glory into shame; and have left the God that protected you, for Idols that cannot protect themselves.

These *Israelites* had many other deasters, and false gods, if we may beleeve *Josephus* Antiq. l. 4. c. 6.

Which yee have made to your selves.

All these feigned Deities with their Images are your owne inventions, and figments of your owne brain, I never commanded any such kind of worship from you. Hence Idols are called the work of mens owne hands, *Psal.* 115. 4. and the Lord threatens such as worshipped the work of their own hands, because they provoked him to anger thereby, *Jer.* 2. 16. & 25. 6. & 44. 8. *Acts* 7. 41. to shew the vanity and nothingness that is in Idols, and the folly of Idolaters in worshipping such things as themselves had made, they are oft called, *The work of mens owne hands*, and their owne inventions, with which they please themselves, though they displease God.

Q. *But whom doth the Prophet charge here with all this gross Idolatry, whether the Ancestors, or the Posterity?*

A. Both. 1. Hee begins with their fore-fathers in the Wilderness, and the better to humble them who so much boasted of their fore-fathers, he labours to convince them of their gross Idolatry, and shewes how early they began to practise this Sin, when they worshipped the Golden Calf, and *Moloch*, as appears by the prohibitions against the worshipping of it, *Levit.* 18. 21. & 20. 2.

To *Portastis tabernaculum Moloch, pertinet ad 40. annos in Deserto, cum sacrificarunt non Deo, sed Moloch & Idolis*, Act. 7. 43.

2 He chargeth the Posterity, and brings down this Idolatry along to their times, shewing how they had justified their ancestors in their Idolatry, by worshipping the Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, and following *Baal*, yea and worshipping the Host of Heaven, 1 *King.* 11. 5. & 2 *King.* 23. 5. 11. *Ezek.* 8. 16. *Zeph.* 1. 5.

The summe of all is this. *It is true, O yee children of* Israel; *that your Progenitors made a great shew of serving and honouring me, carrying my Tabernacle about with them, in the Wilderness, pretending that it was their glory to have me present amongst them; when indeed their hearts were set upon their Idols, and false Deities, as* Moloch, *and* Chiun, *the Sun, the Moon, the Starres,*

Starres, and all the Host of Heaven, as appears by the multitude of those *Images*, and representations of their false-gods which they carried about with them, to worship them; and you their Posterity have trod in the sinful steps of your fore-fathers, and have out-gone them in Idolatry; therefore *I will now banish you to the remotest parts of Assyria, even beyond* Babylon.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Naturally we are exceeding prone to Idolatry.*

This is clear from the example of these *Israelites*, to whom the Lord so oft appeared, *Exod.* 19. & 33. & 34. both in ways of Judgement, and of Mercy. To them the Law was given, and to them were committed the Oracles of God, *Psal.* 147. 19, 20. *Rom.* 3. 2. & 9. 4, 5. and yet how frequently and fearfully did they and their Fathers fall into this sin, and this was not only the temper of these *Jewes*, but of us *Gentiles* also, we are easily seduced, and lead away with dumb Idols, 1. *Cor.* 12. 2.

See more in M. *Caryl* on Job 31. 26. Obs. 1.

2. *When men know God, yet walk not up to their light, but wilfully sin against it, then God gives them up to a reprobate sense, so that they worship Stocks and Stones, Starres, and Images, as these did here*, Acts 7. 42.

See more in my Com. on 2 Tim. 4. 4. Obs. 5.

Thus it was with the Gentiles, *Rom.* 1. 24, 25, 26, &c. Those that will not beleeve and obey the Truth, God will give them up to strong delusions to beleeve lyes, 2 *Thes.* 2. 10, 11. false Prophets shall arise and cry down Ordinances, and you shall beleeve them; they shall cry up Superstition, Idolatry, Libertinism, &c. and you shall follow them. This is a sad Judgement, yet usually God thus punisheth Sin with Sin, as blindness with blindness, ignorance with greater ignorance, and idolatry with grosser idolatry; when men begin to fall from God, they fall to worship Calves, Starres, Stocks, and *Images*. They never rest till they come to destruction.

Error minimus in prino pio, sit maximus in fine. See *Manton* on Jude 12. p. 421. and my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 13. p. 236, &c. *Greenhil* on Ezek 8. 16.

As all Sin, so especially this of *Idolatry* is very prolifical. The Cloud that at first is like a mans hand, will suddenly overspread the whole Heavens. The little Wheel sets the great one a going. A little Defeat at first may become a total Rout at last, *Per scelera ad scelus*, one sin usually makes way for another.

another. Sin and sopor is endless, wicked men (when the Devil drives) know not where, nor when they shall stop or stay, *Prov.* 23. *ult. Hos.* 10. 1. & 13. 2. *Jer.* 9. 3, 5. Sin hath no foundation, but runs on and multiplies *in infinitum*. Abus that at first burnt Incense to Idols, at last burnt his children to them, 2 *Chron.* 28. 3. as these Jews did theirs to *Moloch*. It concerns us then to keep close to the Rule, for if wee swarve never so little from that, we shall suddenly run our selves into a Labyrinth of Superstition, sin and error.

Fertilis est Idololatria ut ex uno Deo fictitio centum mox gignantur; ex superstitione unâ seaturiant mille. Calvin.

3. *Fore-fathers must not be followed in sin.*

These Israelites forsook the Rule to follow their Fore-fathers in their Idolatry, and now they perish with them. But of this before.

See my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. p. 246.

4. *Idolaters are deeply in love with their Idols;*

They hug them, they carry them, they kiss them, *Hos.* 13. 2. In *Jer.* 8. 2. we have five expressions to set forth the strong affections which Idolaters bear to their Idols. They love, serve, seek, worship, and walk after them, as if they could never do enough for them. They had as lieve part with their lives, as part with them, *Judg.* 18. 24. *Ye have taken away my gods* (saith *Micah*) *and what have I more? q. d.* you have even taken all, since you have taken away mine Idols, which are so near and dear to mee. They are married to them, no wonder then if they love them, *Hos.* 4. 17. Besides, they are gods of their own making, *Exod.* 32. 1. and 'tis natural to every one to love its own workmanship.

5. *Idolatry doteth men.*

It makes men worship Posts and Pictures, Stars and Planets, Dogs and Cats, Onions and Leeks, any thing save God. As those that are given up to corporal uncleanness, care not with whom they commit it: So 'tis in spiritual Whoredome. Affection blindes the judgement, and doteth men. Idolatry is a bewitching, flesh-pleasing-sin, which steals away the heart, and therefore is compared to fornication, *Ezek.* 23. 2. to 18. which infatuates and steals away mens hearts. The Whore of *Babylon* hath all alluring Ceremonies, Altars, Images, Gorgeous Vestments, Musick, &c. with many other inchantments to seduce men, *Rev.* 17. 1, 2,

Quis nescit qualia demens Ægyptus portenta colat? Juven. Sat. 15. *V. Godwin.* Jewish Antiq. *l.* 4. *c.* 7. *p.* 164. & *M. John Smith*, his select discourse. p. 25. and my Com. on Hos. 13. p. 119.

Humanarum mentium ludibrium superstitio. Curtius.

8. 2, 4. Hence we read of the delectable things of Idolaters, *Isa.* 44. 9. The sight of the Sun, Moon, Stars, and all the host of Heaven, should have convinced them of the Majesty and Glory of their Creator, and have induced them to worship him, but they being besotted and blinded by sin and Satan, worshipped the creature instead of God, and serve those which were made for their service.

Besides, what man that is well in his wits will trust in such gods for safety, as cannot save themselves from fire and spoil? All their Idols, the Calves and all, *Hos.* 10. 5, 6. were carried away by the Conquering *Assyrian*, according to the custome of Conquerers, which was to carry away the gods of the Conquered Nations, *Jer.* 43. 12.

6. *God hath many Hosts and Armies at command.*

Hee hath the Host of Heaven, 1. *Angels*, 1 King. 22. 19. *Luk.* 2. 13. 2. Hee hath Sun, Moon and Stars, even the Stars in their kinde shall fight against *Sisera*, Judg. 5. 20. These *Stephen* calls the Host of Heaven. 3. All creatures are his Hosts and Armies, ready to execute what ever he commands, *Job* 25. 3. *Amos* 9. 6. Fear therefore to offend this Lord of Hosts. But of this before. Amos 4 *ult.*

7. *To worship the Host of Heaven is a great sin.*

Hence the Lord upbraids these *Israelites* both fathers and children with this sin, and threatens to send them into captivity for it. This the Lord oft forbade them, *Deut.* 4. 19. and blames them for it, 2 *King.* 17. 16. 2 *Chron.* 33. 3, 5. *Jer.* 8. 2, 3. & 19. 13. & 44. 17. *Ezek.* 8. 16. and commands that he should dye that did it, *Deut.* 17. 3, 4, 5. *Job* calls this kinde of Idolatry a denying of God, and a sin to be punisht by the Judges, *Job* 31. 26, 27, 28. How much greater is their sin which worship gods of their own making, gods of Wood and Stone, Crosses, Crucifixes, Images, &c. Idols which their own heads invented, and their own hands have made, yea that with five words of consecration can create their Creator, and then worship the works of their own hands. How great this Idolatry is, *Costerus* the Jesuite shall tell you, it (saith he) Christ be not really and corporally present in the Eucharist which (saye the Catholicks) the grossest Idolaters in the world. but except we worship it, we [illegible] unto God. See Caryl on Job 31. 26. Osi. 4.

Talis esset Idolatria, qualis in orbe terrarum nunquam vel visus, vel auditus fuit. Coster. Enchirid. c. 12.

men make Gods to themselves, they make Rods for them-

themselves to God will bid his hands be such, and send them beyond *Damascus*, yea beyond *Babylon*, there they shall live in misery and slavery, serving sin and Satan in the want of all things; who would not serve God with joy and gladness of heart in the abundance of all things: The Israelites of old made a golden Calf, and worshipped the works of their own hands, but it cost many of them their lives, *Exod.* 32. 27. 'Tis a good Rule, *De Deo, nil sine Deo*, In Gods worship we must do nothing without the warrant of this Word, *Deut.* 32. *ult. Mat.* 28. 20. all must be done according to the Pattern, even to a Pin, *Exod.* 27. 19. hence 'tis said nine times in one chapter, That *all was done as the Lord commanded* Moses, *Exod.* 39. 1, 5, 7, 21, 26, 29, 32, 42, 43.

See more *Caryl* on Job 31. 26. Obs. 3. and my Com. on Hos. 13. p. 89, 120.

Verse 27.

Therefore I will cause you to go into Captivity beyond Damascus, saith the Lord, whose Name is the God of Hosts.

WE have all along seen *Israels* sin, we are now come to their suffering.

I will cause you to go into Captivity.

The Lord had freely given them the holy Land for their Inheritance, to the end that they might serve him with gladness of heart, in the abundance of all things; but since they had defiled that good Land with their abominations, the Lord resolved to rid the Land of them and to send them into captivity beyond *Damascus*, which was fulfilled when *Salmanasser* took *Samaria*, and subdued the Kingdome of *Israel* to himself, 2 *King.* 17. 6, 8, 9.

q. d. Since your Forefathers were bad, and you are worse, treading in their Idolatrous steps, and out-going them in sin; therefore I will bring upon you the judgements threatned, driving you out of your own Land, and dispersing you in forein Countries.

In the words we have 1. A judgement threatned, and this is banishment and captivity, *I will cause you to go into Captivity.*

2. Here

2. Here is the extent of this captivity, 'tis *beyond Damascus*, saith *Amos*, *beyond Babylon*, saith *Stephen*.

3. Here is the meritorious and procuring cause of this suffering, and that is their sin, implied in the Illative particle *Therefore*, you have been Idolatrous, superstitious, hypocritical, &c. therefore you shall go into captivity.

4. Here is the confirmation of this commination; 'tis not I, but the Lord, whose name *is the God of Hosts*, that hath said it, and he both can and will do it, unless by timely repentance ye prevent it.

I will cause you to go into Captivity beyond Damascus.

q. d. I will send you packing farther than the people of *Damascus*, for the Syrians of *Damascus* were carried captives but to *Kir*, 2 King. 16. 9. but you shall be carried captives far beyond them, even to *Persia*, and the Region of the *Caspians*, Ezra 8. 17.

2. And more genuinely, whereas they looked on *Damascus*, (the Metropolis of *Syria*, a City of praise, *i. e.* a renowned, goodly, wealthy, strong City, *Isa.* 7. 8. & 8. 4. *Jer.* 49. 25.) as an impregnable fortress, and frontier defence for all their Country, and they might think to get shelter there, the King thereof being their confederate; the Prophet tells them that *Damascus* should not save them, for they should be carried captives beyond *Damascus*, even into the farthest and remotest parts of *Assyria*, beyond *Babylon*.

Quest. *But how shall we reconcile* Amos *and* Stephen? Amos *saith they shall go beyond* Damascus, *but* Stephen *saies they shall go further, even beyond* Babylon, *Act.* 7. 43.

Ans. 1. Some conceive it might be some mistake of the Scribe, beyond *Babylon*, for beyond *Damascus*, but there is no ground for such a conceit.

2. The Answer is ease, the difference is onely verbal, not material, in words, but not in sense. What the Prophet spake somewhat darkly, *Stephen* declares more clearly, according to the truth of the history, and the verity of what was done, and 'tis a known *Rule*, that the Penmen of the New Testament do give the sense, though not the very words of the Prophets which they quote; when they cite places, they do not translate, but explain and expound them rather. *Ut* writing in Greek, follow-

See more, *Sharpius Symphor. Loc.* 57. *p.* 212. *Schools-Guard* Rule 20.

AN EXPOSITION, WITH Practical OBSERVATIONS UPON The Sixth Chapter of *Amos*.

VERSE I.

Woe to them that are at ease in Sion, *and trust in the Mountain of* Samaria, *which are named chief of the Nations, to whom the house of* Israel *came.*

IN this Chapter the blunt Prophet raiseth his stile, grows Rhetorical, and is very eloquent; (as St. *Austin* from this very Chapter hath long since observed) not with a fantastick, frothy, affected eloquence; but with a grave and decent elegancy of speech, suitable to the dignity of the matter which hee treats of. Hee that makes the dumb to speak, and out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hath ordained strength to confound his enemies, can by his Word and Spirit make a stammering *Moses*, a rustical *Amos*, and silly fisher-men, fluent of speech. No matter what the Instrument is, if God be but the Teacher.

In hoc capite est admirabile quoddam artificium, tam ad morem, quàm ad ornatum & venustatem orationis. Aug. de Doct. Christ. lib. 4. cap. 7.

In this Chapter is contained the Sum of *Amos* his fifth Sermon, where we have sin and sorrow, security and misery attending each other.

1 Here is a reprehension of *Judah* and *Israel*, for their *carnal security, & sensuality.* V. 1. to 6th.

2 For their *stupidity and sottishness*, in taking no warning by the example of their rich and populous neighbour Cities, which God had destroyed for their sins. *Vers.* 2.

3 For their *contempt of Gods Threatnings*, which brought forth oppression and tyranny. *Vers.* 3.

4 For *Pride, Luxury, and Riot*, especially in their Rulers and rich men. *Vers.* 4, 5, 6.

5 For *Inhumanity*, want of sympathy, and brotherly compassion towards such as were in distress. Though the whole Land was depopulated, and all the open Country was exposed to the fury of the merciless enemy, yet because their fenced Cities (whereof *Jerusalem* and *Samaria* were the chief) were at present free, they lived at ease, and never regarded the miseries of others. *Vers.* 6.

6 There was amongst them, *perverseness, obstinacy*, and *rebellion*. *Vers.* 12.

7 Perverting of Justice. *Vers.* 12.

8 Carnal confidence, and gloriation in that which could not help them. *Vers* 13.

The Lord had born long with these their great provocations, and used all means to amend them, but all in vain, and therefore now follows their woe and punishment. As first *Captivity*, banishment and deportation out of their own Land. *Vers.* 7.

2 Detestation of them and their priviledges. *Vers.* 8.

3 Desolation and destruction of their Cities, by the *Sword*, confirmed by Gods Oath. *Vers.* 8.

4 *Desperation*, and sinking under their carnal confidence. They should be so terrified, that they should not once dare to make mention of the name of the Lord. *Vers.* 10.

5 The *Pestilence* should rage so terribly, that if a numerous family be reduced to ten, those ten shall dye, and for want of others, a mans Uncle shall bury him. *Vers.* 9, 10.

6 An Epidemical and general destruction of rich and poor, Palaces and Cottages, none shall escape, but as all had sinned, so all should now be punisht for their sins, from one end of the Land to the other. A forein enemy like a violent flood should over-run the whole land from North to South, and from one side to the other.

Woe

Woe to them that are at ease in Sion.

In this first Verse, the Prophet thunders against the secure, and sensual Inhabitants of *Judah* and *Israel*, and especially against the great ones, *Qui in divitiis, sic moribus primi fuere*; as they abounded in wealth, so in wickedness also; who gave themselves to Pastimes, and Merriment, in despight of the Prophets threatnings, and that in a time when Gods Judgements were round about them. Though *Amos* were primarily sent to *Israel*, yet *Judah* being partaker with them in Sin, he all along in this Chapter joyns them together in reproof.

In the words we have, 1. *A Judgement denounced*, included in the Particle, Hoi, *Woe*, which is used three waies in Scripture.

1 By way of *Commiseration*, when we are grieved at the calamities which we see are coming upon a people, *Jer.* 6. 4. & 13. *ult.* *Micah* 7. 1.

2 By way of *Imprecation*, when we pray for the destruction of the incurable enemies of Gods Church, *Psalm* 40. 14, 15.

3 There is a woe of *Prediction, and denuntiation*, which is the Woe here meant, where the Prophet fore-tells, and denounceth Judgements temporal and eternal, against this obstinate and back-sliding people. Hee threatens them with a Woe of Captivity, and general desolation here, which was but a fore-runner of their eternal destruction hereafter. And this woe of denouncing miseries against an impenitent People, is very frequent in Scripture; as *Isa.* 3. 11. & 5. 11, 18. *Ezek.* 16. 23. *Mat.* 11. 21. & 23. 23, 25. *Luke* 6. 24. The Prophet had oft fore-told them of evils approaching, but they were no whit awakened thereby, but Princes, and people still lay secure, and sung a *requiem* to themselves, putting the evil day farre from them; therefore the Prophet falls to denouncing Woes against them, the better to awaken them out of their deep sleep, and security. The Woe prefixt in the front of this Verse, is to bee understood in the rest of the Verses, as vers. 3. *Woe to them that put the evil day farre from them. Woe to them that lye upon beds of Ivory, &c.* vers. 4. *Woe to them that chant to the sound of the Viol*, vers. 5. *Woe to them that drink Wine in bowls*, ver. 6.

Vae, est interjectio summam & gravissimam calamitatem alicui obventuram significans. *Revenil.*

2 Here are the *Persons* against whom this Judgement is denounced, and those are,

1 *Securé* wealthy sinners, who lived quietly, and carelessly, at ease, in pomp and pleasure, without any fear of Gods judgements, or any sense of his displeasure. This more especially concerned the great ones of those times, who took no notice of Gods hand on their inferiours; though the Regions round about lay wast, yet they lay snorting, and secure, in their fenced Cities, making their guts their God, and sleighted all his threatnings; they were full themselves, and they little regarded who else wanted.

Hasceanannim. i. e. *quietis, insolentibus & securis; tranquillitas enim homines securos & insolentes reddit. Radix Shaan videtur constata ex sheen,* i. e. *qui nihil timent, curant, agunt; sed in summa pace & rerum affluentia, securam, otiosam, tranquillam, & delicatam agunt vitam, à Lapide.* The Septuagint mistaking the root Shaan, for Shaan, doe render it corruptly, *Vae spernentibus Sion.*

2 He thunders against *Carnal confident-ones*, who trusted in the Mountaine of *Samaria*; that is, they trusted in the strength and riches of *Samaria*, their chief City, as if it were invincible; and by reason of its situation impregnable. They trusted not in God, but in their wealth and walls.

3 *Ungrateful men*; God had made them the Head of the Nations, and brought them into *Canaan*, a Land flowing with Milk and Honey; and by his owne Almighty Power he planted them there, and drove out the *Canaanites* before them, (*Psal.* 44. 3. & 78. 55.) but they forgot the God of their Mercies, and fell to Luxury and Riot. He made them the *chiefest*, most famous, and renowned of all the Nations, he had separated those twelve Tribes from all the rest of the World, to be his owne peculiar people (*Exod.* 19. 5. *Jer* 2. 3.) they were to him as the flower and first fruits of the Nations, whom he prized and preferred before them all.

Nekuba, i. e. *summosi, celebres. Rescit, significat, primitias, & principium gentium inter quas eminebat Israel, tanquam populus à Deo electus, Deique primo genitus. à Lapide.*

To whom the House of Israel *came.*

This is another Priviledge; these two Cities, *Jerusalem*, and *Samaria* were the chief Seats, and residence of their Kings, and therefore here was a great confluence of people, both for Civil and Ecclesiastical affairs, *Judah* and *Benjamin* went to *Jerusalem*, and the ten Tribes to *Samaria*,

3 Here

3 Here are the *Places* where those Sinners dwelt, and that is in *Jerusalem*, of which Mount *Sion* was an eminent part, and therefore is oft put for *Jerusalem* it self (*à parte præstantiori fit denominatio*) this was the Metropolis of *Judah*, as *Samaria* was of the Ten Tribes. *Samaria* is principally threatned, yet because the other two Tribes were their brethren in sin, therefore he threatens them with parity of punishment.

The inhabitants of these two chief Cities were more secure and sensual in the midst of Gods Judgements than other parts of the Land, and therefore the Prophet deals more sharply and roundly with them, and by a Prolepsis prevents a cavil, whereas they might object, that they were the chief of the Nations, and all the people resorted to their Cities for Justice, and for the Worship of God, and therefore they concluded, that God would not destroy them; *Yea*, therefore saith the Prophet, *God will destroy you, because you sin against such Mercies and Priviledges.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *The Scripture is full of Divine Rhetorick and Eloquence.*

Carnal-worldly-wise-men look upon the Bible (as St. *Austin* did before his conversion) as a book of a low, incompt, unlearned stile. This very sixth of *Amos* will in part confute such. The Prophecie of *Esay* abounds with such a fluent, divine, grave, and lofty stile, that all the eloquence of *Cicero*, and all the flowers of *Demosthenes*, with the rest of those admired Heathens, is but as Chaff to Wheat, and Dross to refined Gold. Hence the Scripture is compared to a pleasant Garden bedeckt with Flowers, and a rich Garment beset with Pearls; when the depth of learning that there lyes hid is uncovered, then the glory of the Word doth affect us, and leaves a deep impression of its excellency upon our spirits. VVee should not therefore barely read the VVord, but search the Scriptures, and dig those Mines, that wee may the better finde out the Golden Oare, *John* 5. 39. VVee should also bless God, who hath given such variety of gifts unto men, for the good of his Church. Some are *Eloquent Orators*, Isa. 3. 3. Others are *Acute Disputants*, and mighty in con-

Aug. Confes. l. 3. c. 5.

V. Perkins on Heb. 11. 12. p. 93. & Rivet Isagoge ad Scripturas, cap. 28. p. 1026. fol. Vol. 2.

V. Mr. Ant. Burgess on 1 Cor. 3. 5. p. 74.

convincing, as *Apollos*, Act. 18. 24, 28. Some are mildle and gentle, as *Barnabas*, others more fierce and fervent, as *Peter* and *Paul*. Some excel in Prose, others in Poetry, as *David*, who is stiled, *the sweet singer of Israel*, many spiritual songs are scattered up and down the Scripture, but none excelled in that gift, like *David*, who was more especially inspired by the Holy Ghost, and singularly qualified for that purpose. All these hath God gifted for the good of his Church, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22.

Naim, i. e. pulcher, speciosus, suavis, tales enim sunt Psalmi quos David composuit, & eani jussit. à Lapide.

Observ. 2. *Those that are highest in Priviledges may bee nearest to miseries.*

Woe to *Sion* first, and then to *Samaria*; So *Rom.* 2. 9. Wrath falls upon the *Jew* first, and then upon the *Gentile*. To be secure in other places was sinful, but to be dead and careless in *Jerusalem* the City of the Living God, where his Temple and Worship was, this doubled their sin, and therefore the Prophet Emphatically sets a Woe upon their heads. *Woe to them that are at ease in Sion.*

See more in my Com. on Hos. 13.15.p.48,49.

3. *Gods Ministers must denounce Woes against the wicked.*

As they must proclaim promises to the penitent, so they must denounce judgements against the obstinate. They must make a difference, to some they must shew lenity, and to others severity, *Jude* 22, 23. What dreadful woes do all the Prophets denounce against impenitent sinners. Christ, who was love it self, and in whom there was no gall, not guile, yet how many dreadful woes did he denounce against the hypocritical Pharisees, even *eight woes* together, *Mat.* 23. 13, 14, 15, 16, 23, 25, 27, 29. If men will be so bold as to proclaim their wickednesse, Ministers must be so bold, as to proclaim their woes.

4. *Woe and sorrow is the portion of secure sinners.*

Both Legal woes, and Evangelical woes; temporal, spiritual, and eternal woes. The Law cryes, Woe to such sinners, and so doth the Gospel; but Gospel-woes are the sadder of the two; for if the Law say, woe to us, yet the Gospel may say mercy to us; but if the Gospel say, woe to us, where shall we finde mercy? 'Tis true, sinners may laugh and be merry in the acting of sin, but woe and weeping is in the conclusion, *Luk.* 6. 25. *The end is death*, Rom. 6. 21. As all the promises of Grace and Mercy hang over the heads of the godly, and drop blessings upon them which

See my Com. on Hos. 13.13. p. 34.

which way soever they go; so clouds of wrath hang over the heads of the wicked, dropping judgements upon them even in their highest prosperity, when they think themselves most free from misery. The mirth of every secure sinner that goes singing to hell, is no better than madnesse; for where security goes before, destruction ever follows; *When men cry Peace, Peace, then comes sudden and swift destruction*, Luk. 12. 19, 20. 1 Thes. 5. 3. Secure *Laish* became a booty to its enemies, *Judg.* 18. 27. Carelesse *Ethiopians* shall be made afraid, *Ezek.* 30. 9. And carelesse Daughters shall be troubled, *Isa.* 32. 9, 10, 11. God is much displeased with a people, when the fire of his wrath shall beset them round about, and yet they remain unhumbled and insensible, *Isa.* 22. 12, 13. and 42. *ult.*

5. *God usually fore-warns us of woe, before hee sends me.*

Hee first cuts men down with the sword of his mouth, before he cuts them off with the sword of his hand. Hee delights not to take sinners at an advantage, but loves to exercise his patience towards them, that they might repent, as wee see in both the destructions of *Jerusalem*, the one by the *Caldeans*, which was fore-told by the Prophets, and the other by the *Romans*, which was fore-told by Christ. But of this at large elsewhere. In my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. p. 64, &c.

6. *Carnal Confidence ruines a Land.*

When men forsake God, and trust in men and mountains, in Kings and Kingdomes, in Guards and Garrisons, both they and their creature-confidences shall perish; for, as there is no policy, so there is no power or fortifications than can defend us against God, *Prov.* 21. 30, 31. Use means wee may, but we must not Idolize them; prepare armies, and strongholds, but not trust in them. They are branded that *trust in Riches*, Psal. 52. 7, 9. and cursed that *trust in men*, Jer. 17. 5, 6.

7. *Ingratitude is a God-provoking, and a Land-destroying sin.*

God had made this people the head of the Nations, and chose them for himself from amongst the Nations, but they fought against God with his own blessings, and as they were increased, so they sinned against him, abusing the good Land which hee had given them, to Idolatry, riot, and excess, till at last the Land spewed them out. See my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. p. 101, 102.

VERS.

VERSE 2.

Pass yee on to Calneh, *and see, and from thence go to* Hemath *the great; then go down to* Gath *of the Philistims, bee they better than these Kingdomes? or their borders greater than your borders?*

THE Prophet goes on to awaken *Israel* and *Judah* out of their security, and to drive them from their carnal confidence in their Mountains, Ammunition, and fortified Cities; to this end hee sets before them Gods Judgements on the *Assyrians*, *Caldeans*, and *Philistims*, those Idolatrous and Heathenish Nations, whose bounds were larger, and their Cities stronger than theirs.

Hee instanceth in three, { *Calneh*, *Hamath*, and *Gath*.

Fuit urbs munitissima, & obtinuit summum imperium, deinde vicina regio amœna fuit & fertilis. Calvin. V. Plin. lib. 6. c. 26.

Hebraice dicta est Chamat, i.e. sol, quòd quasi sol inter urbes orientis effulgerit, à Lapide.

1. *Calneh*, this was an ancient, wealthy, great City, built by *Nimrod* after the Flood, in the Territories of *Babylon*, Gen. 10.10. It was afterwards inlarged by the *Parthians*, and called *Ctesiphon*, and was made the Metropolis of the Kingdome.

2. *Hamath*, called here the great and mighty City to distinguish it from a City of that name in the Land of *Israel*, *Jesh.* 19.32,35. It lay on the North side of *Israel*, and was a boundary of the promised Land, *Numb.* 13. 21. & 34.8. *Zach.* 9.2. 'Twas built by *Antiochus*, and thereupon called *Antiochia*, and was the Metropolis of *Syria*. 'Twas destroyed by the *Assyrian* for all its power and greatness, *Isa.* 10.9.

3. *Gath*, a strong City of the Philistims, well known to *Israel* for its enmity against them, 2 *Sam.* 1,20. 'Twas at last taken, its walls were broken down, and it made tributary to others, 2 *Chron.* 26.6.

These bordering famous Cities were well known to them, and therefore the Lord instanceth in them, though under them synecdochically other flourishing Cities which were made

made a desolation, may also bee included. Hee bids them *See, and diligently consider* the downfall of those places, that their falls might make them fear, and flye from security, oppression, and carnal-confidence, lest they bee ruined as these were, and they bee made an example unto others since they will not bee warned by others.

'Tis not *Nabat, vidit*, but *Reu*, from *Raah, observavit, curiose inspexit.*

Bee they better than these Kingdomes, or the borders of their Land greater than your borders?

These words admit of some difficulty. Some make the Interrogation a Negation, *q.d.* Are these Nations better than yours? in no wise, for do but compare your Kingdome of *Judah* and *Israel* with those Kingdomes; your Cities with their Cities, and your borders with theirs; and it will easily appear, that none of those Nations are better than your Nation, for either they are Tributary to others, or ruined: God hath done more for you, than for them in many respects, the greater is your sin, and the sorer will your punishment bee, if you abuse so pleasant a Land, and such rich mercies to the dishonour of him that gave them. Thus they bring in the Lord upbraiding them for their ingratitude, that they had not rendred according to the mercies hee had shewed them.

This sense is good, and many learned men go this way, and though it must bee acknowleded, that if wee look on *Canaan*, *Israels* Land with all its priviledges, *it was the glory of all Lands*, Ezek. 20. 15. yet other Nations might surpass it for strength, and greatness of Cities, for largeness of borders, and for amenity and fruitfulness of soil, as *Babylon* did.

But with submission to better judgements, I conceive the Interrogation to bee here an Assertion, and the genuine sense of the place to bee this, That it was in vain for them to trust in their Mountains, Riches, and strong Cities, since other Nations with their Metropolies which were greater and stronger than theirs, were now decayed and ruined. That Almighty hand which brought them down, notwithstanding all their Ammunition and Fortifications, will also bring *Israel* down, notwithstanding all their riches and strength. Behold therefore as in a glass, whither Luxury, Oppression, Security, and abuse of Mercies hath brought those Cities, and do you fear by their Examples.

V. Schools-Guard, Rule 30

The summe of all is this, *O yee Inhabitants of* Jerusalem,

and Samaria, *that glory in Mount* Sion, *and trust in the Mountain of* Samaria; *Go and see what I have done to* Calneh, Hemath *and* Gath, *three potent, populous, famous Cities, seated in three different Kingdomes, viz.* Babylon, Syria *and* Palestina; *consider how I have made them a desolation for their sins, and have brought their borders into a narrower compass, though they were larger and pleasanter than theirs, and were fortified both by Art and Nature: Bee warned therefore by their example, and go not on in your Idolatry, Luxury, Security, and Obstinacy, least you also become a desolation like to them.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *We should diligently observe, and carefully consider the Judgements of God on others.*

We should not let a judgement passe that we see at home, or hear of abroad, without learning something of God from it. As wee should consider his mercies to make us love him, so we should consider his judgements to make us fear him. Hence 'tis that God bids his people here, Go, Go, Go; Go to *Calneh*, Go to *Hemath*, Go to *Gath*, and consider what I have done to them for their sins. Go not with your feet, but with your affections; go not in body to view the ruines of those places, (for that you may do and be never the better.) but in your Meditations go thither, and observe Gods hand upon them to awaken you. As a man may go to Heaven even whilst his body is on earth, yet by Meditation hee may ascend thither; so by Meditation we may go to *Germany*, *Savoy*, *Ireland*, *Poland*, and see Gods Judgements there. Do not barely think of Gods Judgements, but ponder every circumstance, and rest not till you have suckt some benefit out of them, and got your heart affected with them.

Wicked men never once think of God or his judgements, they forget him daies without number, and he is not in any of their thoughts, and as for his judgements they are far above out of his sight; or if he sleightly think of them, that is all: But you must know that there are three Acts of the Soul, 1. *Cogitation*. 2. *Meditation*. 3. *Consideration*. *Cogitation* is a thought and away. *Meditation* is a dwelling longer upon an Object. But *Consideration* looks round about, and weighs

all

all Circumstances of Judgements, and Mercies, that they may take a deeper impression upon our hearts; and this is that which the Lord so oft calls for; Hee would have us *consider our waies*, to humble us, *Hag.* 1. 5, 7. His *Judgements* to fear us, *Job* 23. 15. His *Mercies* to allure us, 1 *Sam.* 12. 24. His *Word*, that wee may attain the practical knowledge of it, 2 *Tim.* 2. 7. This consideration fortifies the soul against sin, it layes before us the losse and hurt which attends upon sin; so that wee cannot rush into it with that boldnesse, as the wicked and inconsiderate do. *Jer.* 8. 6.

See more in my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 4 p. 118.

2. *Gods Judgements on others must awaken us.*

Their destruction must be our instruction. As Gods people here must go to *Calneh*, *Hemath*, and *Gath*, so he bids them go to *Shiloh*, and consider what hee did to that privileged place, and be warned by their woes, *Jer.* 7. 12. 'Tis a great favour when the Lord teacheth us our lessons on other mens books, and backs, making them examples unto us, when hee might have made us examples unto them.

See more in my Com. on Psal. 73. *ult.* Obs. 1.

3. *Sin brings famous Cities to ruine.*

Wee see here three famous Cities with all their Territories made a desolation for their sins. Let men make walls as high as heaven, and ditches as deep as hell, yet if sin reign within, it will ruine all, *Deut.* 18. 9, 12. This brought the Kingdome of *Israel* into the hands of the *Assyrians*, 2 *King.* 17. 7. to 19. and *Judah* into the hands of the *Chaldeans*. Sins, especially crying sins, do emasculate mens spirits, and weaken the hearts and hands of a people, so that they become an easie prey to a cruel adversary.

See more in my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. p. 71.

Verse 3.

Yee that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to draw near.

IN this Verse the Prophet goes on with his charge, especially against the Judges, Rulers, Counsellours, and those in Power and Authority in the Kingdome of *Judah* and *Israel*. Hee chargeth them in this Verse with two sins, which were the effects and evidence of their security before mentioned, Verse 1. The first is the contempt of Gods Threatnings,

God oft foretold them by his Prophets that Judgements were coming upon them, but they would not beleeve it, but *put the evil day far from them*; Sleighting Gods Threatnings as if they had been but fables, and would never surprize them. Though they walkt in wayes of wickednesse, adding sin to sin, and daily provoked the Lord to anger, yet they blest themselves in their evil wayes, promising themselves peace and prosperity for all that. They were setled upon their lees, and lived without any fear or thought of danger, giving themselves up to Idlenesse, Wantonnesse, Pride, Luxury, Violence, and all manner of Iniquity; not once thinking of the destruction which was coming upon themselves, and the Kingdome. Yea they counted it a loathsome thing (as the word in the Original signifies) once to mention the evil day. They were so given up to mirth and jollity, that they would not once hear of sorrow. They thought themselves priviledged by having the Temple, and Gods worship amongst them, against all storms and tempests. But the further they put away the evil day, the nearer it was to them; and though they could have wished there had been no such day, yet their wishes were but vain; for the Lord had decreed to bring a dismal day upon them, and it is not the counsels of men, but the counsels of the Lord that shal stand, and the thoughts of his heart unto all generations, *Psal.* 33.10,11. As they had their evil day of sinning, so God was determined to bring upon them an evil day of suffering.

Middah, from whence comes *Menaddim, significat remotionem, seu quicquid propter immunditiem removetur; quod omnes fugiunt & aversantur.*

Q. *But what was that evil day?*

A. The evil day here meant, was more especially *the day of their Captivity*, when the *Assyrian* should come and carry away *Israel*, and the *Babylonian* should come and carry away *Judah* out of their own Land into Captivity and banishment. This evil day the Prophet calls before, *a day of darkness, and not of light*, Amos 5.18,19,20.

Diem mali, i. e. diem pœnæ, synec. Gen.

The words are read by some *passively*, thus, Yee are separated, and set apart by divine Justice for an evil day, even for a day of banishment and slaughter, *q. d. Yea have long lived in sensuality and security, as if you had been far from an evil*

Separati estis in diem malum. vulg.

Though the evil day bee here primarily meant of some particular judgement coming upon Israel, yet it may be extended unto the day of the general Judgement, which will be unto the wicked (in a way of eminency) the evil day of sad and doleful tidings. *Jeanes.*

day,

day, and yet you are marked out, and set apart for an evil day. All the evil dayes which you have hitherto escaped, do but lead you to an evil day from which there will bee no escaping.

But the words are better read *actively* (according to our Translation) setting forth the danger that attends voluptuous and sensual men, whose belly is their God, who lye upon beds of Ivory, and sing to the sound of the Viol, yet put the evil day far away. Their work all the day long was to do evil, and yet they put the evil day far from them with abundance of scorn and contempt.

Menaddim, elongatis, procul repellitis, & cum fastidio quodam & contemptu à vobis rejicitis diem malum. Mercer.

And cause the seat of violence to draw near.

Here is a second effect and fruit of their security, and that is *Tyranny*, and Injustice, Cruelty and Oppression. *They cause the seat of Violence to draw near.* This sin doth necessarily follow the former, for when men are hardened in sin and security, putting off the Threatnings of God, and driving away all fear of danger from themselves, such must needs grow outragious and cruel, terrifying others with their Violence, Oppression, Rapine, and Unrighteousnesse, *Amos* 3. 10. So much the word in the Original implies; Iniquity acted by force, and violation of Justice.

Chamas, Violentia, rapina, injuria, injustitia & iniquitas.

Quest. *But what is meant by causing the Seat, or Throne of Violence to draw neer?*

Answ. 1. Negatively; it cannot be meant of the *Assyrian*, or any other enemies power that was coming neer; *Yee cause the seat of Violence to draw neer*; that is, (say some) by your sins yee cause the violent *Assyrian* and *Babylonian* to draw neer, and come against you to your own destruction. This is a Truth, but not from this Text.

2. Much lesse can it be meant of causing any false feasts or *Sabbaths* to draw neer; as the Septuagint mistaking the Original (as they do very often) do render it, *appropinquantes Sabbata mendacia*, as if they had set up false Sabbaths, which God abhorred. But this is far from the scope of the Text.

The word is, *Shebet, Sedes*, 'tis not *Shabat*, *quiescere*.

3. Neither is it put Antithetically, by way of opposition to the former clause, *q. d. O yee voluptuous and secure sinners, yee put the evil day far from you, and yet by your sins yee pull it upon you, persevering still in your oppression and cruelty; you would fain put off the judgement from you, yet you will*

not remove your sins, which cause the Judgement.

But the meaning briefly is this, The Prophet chargeth them with their going on in their Luxury and Inhumanity, oppressing, and vexing the poor and needy, which had no helper. They were so hardned in their sin, that now nothing but unrighteousness, and violence reigned amongst them. They had turned the * *Seat* of Justice into the Seat of Injustice, and the Throne of Majesty into the throne of Iniquity, establishing mischief by a Law (*Psal.* 94. 20.) rushing violently into sin, as the Horse into the battle; abusing their power to the abasing of their brethren. So much is implied by the Seat, and Throne of violence, as appears by the like expression, *Revel.* 2. 13. Christ commends the Church of *Pergamus* for her constancy to the truth, and that in a place *where Satan had his throne*, i. e. in a place where Heresie, Superstition, Idolatry, and all kind of wickedness prevailed, and bare sway without controul: for where sin reigns, there Sathan rules, and there he erects his throne. So these sensual and secure sinners, had set up a throne of violence, and a seat of iniquity, that is, they were come to the height of oppression, and cruelty, as being monsters, rather than men.

* *Sedes*, i. e. *tribunal.* (*Synec.* Gen.) *Violentia*, i. e. *in qua pronuntiatis violentas sententias, seu in qua violentiam exercetis sententiis vestris. Met. adjuncti.*

Solium in quitatis significat potentiam, magnitudinem & dominium impietatis. Mercer.

OBSERVATIONS.

Three Observations do Naturally flow from these words.

1 *That God hath an evil day, to bring upon evil men.*

2 *That evil men put this evil day farre from them.*

3 *That when they do so, then they run into violence and outrage.*

1 Of the first, *That God hath an evil day, to bring upon evil men.* As they have had their time of provoking him, with the evil of sin, so he will find a time to vexe them, with the evil of punishment. Such violent oppressors are the proper objects of Gods hatred, *Psal.* 11. 5. and though for a time they may escape trouble, yet they are not delivered from it; all their preservations from evil, are but reservations to greater evils. The Lord hath many wayes to deliver the godly, but he hath no way to deliver the wicked, they having refused all wayes of his appointment for their owne deliverance, therefore as to them, he knoweth many wayes to reserve them to the

V. My Conv. on Psal. 82. 2.

the Day of Judgement, to be punished, 2 *Pet.* 2. 9. When Beasts have been fatted in pleasant Pastures, then they are brought forth to the slaughter, *Jer.* 12. 1, 3. As God hath made all things for himself, so he hath destinated the wicked for wrath, *Prov.* 16. 4.

2. *It is the property of wicked men, to put the evil day farre from them.* They look upon Gods Judgements at a distance, not so much as once dreaming of them, till they light upon them. They cry, Peace, peace, when sudden and swift destruction is at hand. This is usual with wicked men, the god of this World hath blinded their eyes, and they wilfully put out their owne eyes, lest they should see that which would but trouble them, and hinder their carnal mirth. They cry, Let us eat and drink (even when Judgements are ready to fall upon their heads) and if wee must dye to morrow, let's be merry before we dye. *Isa.* 22. 13. thus they are jeering, when they should be fearing; they take no notice of Gods Judgements, they are farre above out of his sight, *Psal.* 10. 5. Let *Noah* warn the Old World one hundred and twenty years together, of an approaching Judgement, yet they knew nothing till the floud came, and swept them all away; and as it was then, so saith our Saviour it will be at the end of the world, *Mat.* 24. 37, 38, 39. 2 *Pet.* 3. 3, 4. This hastens wrath, when men cry, the dayes are prolonged, and because Judgements are deferred, therefore they will never come; this makes the Lord come suddenly upon such sinners, *Ezek.* 12. 22, 27. *Amos* 9. 10. Sensuality and security close mens eyes, that they cannot see an evil day approaching, *Luke* 21. 34. it makes men feel trouble before they see it, and to be past hope before they had any fear of hurt.

Wicked men, when they are in prosperity, they dream they shall so continue to eternity; hence the Prophet brings them in, making Covenants with Death, and agreements with Hell, and compacts with all other troubles, that they should not come nigh them. Thus they foolishly conceit, and speak, *Isa.* 28. 15. *If the over-flowing scourge pass thorow, yet it shall not come nigh us.* Thus they make lyes their refuge, and under falshood doe they hide themselves. Notwithstanding all the Judgements threatned against them for their sins, yet they vainly promised themselves safety, and impunity, as if they had

had been at a fee with the Devil, and Hell, and thereupon call for Wine, and strong drink, pampering and flattering themselves in their sin, confidently concluding (as if all the World, and Time it self were at their dispose) that *to morrow should be as this day, and much more abundant*, q. d. Those sad Predictions of the Prophet will never come, but we shall scape as well for the future as we have done hitherto, yea better, and more happily, *Isa. 56. ult.* But let us be moved with fear as *Noah* was, *Heb. 11. 7.* and get into the Ark of Gods favour and protection, and then we may sweetly sing, *The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom should I fear?* at famine and destruction in an holy security thou mayest laugh, for *in six troubles the Lord will be with thee, and in the seventh he will not leave thee*, Job 6. 19, 20, 21, 22. get an holy, prudential, providential fear, to prepare for troubles before they come, and then you will not be dismayed at them, when they doe come; Darts fore-seen are dintless, *Job 3. 25. Psal. 46. & 112. 6, 7. Hab. 3. 16.* Realize dangers as if they were present, that will help to awaken us; but when men look upon Judgements at a great distance, and think it may be many years hence ere they come, or they may not come in their dayes, or they may not come at all; this breeds security, and security breeds tyranny and oppression, for so it runs, *They put the evil day farre away, and then cause the seat of violence to draw near.*

Ὁ φόβος βουλευτικὸς ποιεῖ. *Timor facit consiliativos. Arist. Rhet. l. 2. c. 6.*

Quæ procul sunt, ea non metuuntur; sciunt enim omnes se aliquando morituros, sed quia mors non prope esse videtur, ideo eam nihil curant. Arist. Rhet. l. 2. c. 6.

3 Obs. *Where carnal security, and Atheistical contempt of Gods Judgements goeth before, there cruelty, violence, and all manner of wickedness follows.* Where health, wealth, peace, and security goes before; there pride, oppression, blasphemy, and cruelty usually follows, *Psal. 73. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. & 94. 4, 5, 6, 7.* especially when wickedness gets into the Throne, and sits on the seat of Judicature, having all power in its hand to oppress the poor, and vexe the needy, then it becomes exceeding tyrannical and cruel.

VERSE 4.

That lye upon Beds of Ivory, and stretch themselves upon their Couches, and eat the Lambs out of the flock, and the Calves out of the midst of the stall.

THe Prophet goes on with his Charge against the Rulers of *Judah* and *Israel*. In this verse hee chargeth them with a *fourth Sin*, which was an effect and evidence of their security, and that is *Luxury and Sensuality*; they spent their time in eating, drinking, sleeping, in mirth and musick, without any sense or sorrow for the afflictions of *Joseph*. Like Swinish Epicures, they minded nothing but their pleasures, stretching themselves on their Ivory-beds, eating the fattest of the flock, inventing variety of Musick and Melody, and new waies to increase their mirth; drinking wine in deep carousing cups, and anointing their bodies with the principal and most precious oyntments which those times and places afforded. And that which highly aggravates their sin was this, that all this was done in a time of mourning, when Gods hand was upon the Regions round about them, and they should have humbled themselves in dust and ashes, and lay on the very ground for their great provocations; yet then were they lying on beds of Ivory, and gave themselves up to all manner of pastimes and merriment. The Prophet therefore the better to awaken them, doth raise his stile, and in a most curious Rhetorical strain doth set before them their lust and luxury, their sin and misery.

Quest. *The question then will bee, whether this curious fare, costly beds, and other creature-delights be simply unlawful?*

Ans. They are not *per se*, and in themselves simply unlawful. God allows great men to lye better, and fare better, and go finer than inferiour persons, provided they use them soberly, seasonably, and thankfully. *The Lord hath given us all things richly to enjoy*, 1 Tim. 6. 17. But then we must not abuse them to riot and excesse, especially in a time of mourning, for that is a God-provoking sin, *Isa.* 22. 12, 13, 14. So that it is not the sober use, but the prophane abuse of the creature which displeaseth God; use them we may, but not luxu-

V. my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 3. P. 89, 90.

riously and unseasonably. 'Twas the sin of this people, that they were riotous in a time of mourning, and did indulge themselves in these sensual delights, even when the fire of Gods wrath was kindled against them, and the Prophets were denouncing the utter destruction both of King and Kingdome; when they should have abated, rather than abounded, and have abridged themselves of their lawful liberties, seeing Gods hand on their Brethren round about them; but they, like sottish *Epicures*, laid not to heart the afflictions of *Joseph*, but like the rich glutton, they fared deliciously every day, not once thinking of the misery of poor *Lazarus*, Luke 16.

So that here wee have, 1. The Sin reproved, and that is, *Luxury*. 2. The kinds or specification of this Luxury, and that is fourfold,

They exceeded
1. In Eating, *Verse* 4.
2. In Musick, *Vers.* 5.
3. In Drinking, *Vers.* 6.
4. In Costly Oyntments, *Vers.* 6.

They lye upon beds of Ivory.

Ordinary beds content not these effeminate ones, they must have costly, curious beds made of the finest Ivory, filled with the softest feathers, and no doubt but they were adorned with gold and silver, as others had been before them, *Hos.* 8. 6. They were so proud, that even their beds, which should have minded them of their graves, proclaimed their pomp and vanity.

They lye upon Ivory bed-steeds; or as the words are in the fountain, they lye upon *Bed-steeds of the Tooth*, viz. such as were made of the Elephants Tooth, which we call Ivory. Not that the Bed-steeds were wholly made of Ivory, but some principal parts of them were adorned with this rarity, which came from *India*, and remote parts, *Ezek.* 27. 15. They were not *lecti eburnei*, but *eburati*, not totally made, but checkered or covered with Ivory; for herewith stately things were wont to be garnished because of its whiteneſſe and dearneſſe, for what is far fetched, and dear bought, delights the wantons of the world. In those Eastern parts they delighted much in Ivory; hence in Scripture wee read of *Ivory-houses*, 2 Kings 22. 39. Amos 3. 15. *Ivory-Palaces*, Psal. 45. 9. *Ivory-Thrones*,

Gnal Mittoth Shen, super lectis dentis. Met. Mat.

Thrones, 2 Chron. 9. 17. *Ivory-benches*, Ezek. 27. 6. *Ivory-Towers*, Cant. 7. 4. *Ivory-Vessels*, Rev. 18. 12. and *Ivory-beds*, as in the Text. On these they lay sleeping, having little else to do. They were not *lectli discubitorii*, beds to lye and eat on, (as the custome then was) but *lectli lascivi*, soft beds on which they lay sleeping, and stretching themselves idly and lasciviously, for so it follows,

Hashshokebim, *Jacentes*, à *Shacab*, *procubuit*, *jacuit*; It was their daily Trade so to do, as the participle implies.

They stretch themselves upon their Couches. When they should be serving God in their places and callings, they in a lazy, luskish, lustful manner, lye yawning and stretching their pampered carkasses upon their Couches.

Some read the words thus, *They are luxurious upon their Couches*, that is, they stretch themselves luxuriously and lasciviously upon their beds, *vers.* 7. the word is used, *Ezek.* 17. 6. for a luxuriant Vine. The sense is the same.

They eat the Lambs out of the Flock, and the Calves out of the midst of the Stall.

Sins seldome go single; before they lay daintily, and now they feed daintily; ordinary fare will not down with them, they must have the fattest and finest that can be picke out of the flock, and most fatning fold. They chuse the fattest out of the places where they were kept to be fatned, be it field or fold. Great beasts are fed in Pastures, but Calves are fed in Stalls, where they are fed with their Dams milk quietly and obscurely, which helps concoction, and fattens them sooner. Thus they gave themselves up to ease and delicacy, pampering themselves with the finest fare.

Maibee, saginarium, ubi vitali saginantur.

Agnos è grege & Vitulos è medio saginarii, i. e. Agnos optimos è grege, & Vitulos optimos ex saginario; nam Præpositio Ex, *nomini apposita* ἐξοχὴν *& præeminentiæ cujusdam significationem ipsi quandoque tribuit, seu* ἐξαίρετόν τι *notat.* Glassius in Philog. S. l. 3. Tract. 6. Canon. 8. mihi p. 765. *ubi Plura.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *A lazy, sensual, Epicurean life that is spent in eating and drinking, sleeping, and pastimes, is very displeasing unto God.*

This makes him set a woe upon the head of those that are at ease in *Sion*, lying on beds of Ivory, stretching themselves upon their Couches, and feeding on the finest fare, fatting, and feasting themselves every day, like the rich glutton, *Luk.* 16. 19.

Such Sensualists, that live in pleasure and wantonness St. *James* rebukes, *James* 5. 5. These are sins *Majoris adherentiæ*, they are hardly shaken off; these sensual Epicurean lusts do estrange the heart from God, close up the eye of the soul, emasculate the spirit, and unfit men for the service of God or man. Hence the Scripture so oft condemns them, *Deut.* 21. 20. *Eccles.* 10. 16, 17. *Luk.* 21. 34. *Rom.* 13. 13, 14. Wee should therefore carry weaned affections to these creature-enjoyments, and use these things, as though we used them not. He that hath beds of Ivory, and lives in a Princely Palace, yet should carry such mortified affections to them, that if the Lord should call him to lye on a pad of straw in prison, he must be ready chearfully to do it. Grace it humbles a man, and makes him know his deserts; a good man that goes in Silks and Sattins, yet can be thankful for Raggs (when God calls him to them) knowing that he is less than the least of all Gods mercies. We should therefore keep a watch over our hearts in our eating, drinking, sleeping, cloathing, for fear of excess. *Licitis perimus omnes.*

See the vileness of *Epicurus*, in *Ross* against *Browns* vulgar Errors, p. 255. and *Culverwells* Light of Nature, ch. 17. p. 185.

Against Luxury and Gluttony. See Mr. *Greenhill* on *Ezek.* 16. 13. Obs. 1. p. 183. and 16. 49. p. 280.

2. *Ministers must not rest in Generals, but they must descend to particulars.*

When the Prophet had denounced a woe against those that were at ease in General, *vers.* 1. now he descends to Particulars, and tells them of the sins of their beds and boards, of their gluttony, drunkenness, sensuality, inhumanity, &c. This particular applying of the Word to the souls of people, is the onely way to convince and convert them; for what is spoken in general to all, few will apply particularly to themselves. This made the Prophets and Apostles to deal so plainly with their people, *Isa.* 58. 1. *Ezek.* 16. 2. *Mat.* 11. 21, 23. *Joh.* 4. 17, 18. *Act.* 2. 36, 37.

See more in my Com. on 2. Tim. 4. 10. Obs. 2. p. 421.

Be not then offended at the plain and powerful preaching of the Word. You will suffer the *Lawyer* to tell you of the flawes in your estates, the *Physitian* to tell you of the diseases in your bodies, the *Watchman* to tell you of an approaching enemy; and will you not suffer the Minister to tell you of eternal dangers, that so you may prevent them?

3. *Sins* (especially great ones) *seldome go alone.*

Security

Security went before, now followes Luxury, Sensuality, Drunkennes, and Inhumanity. As great men have great attendance, so great Sins have many followers; and as there is a concatenation of Vertues, 2 *Pet.* 1. 5, 6, 7, 8. so there is a concatenation of Vices also, 2 *Tim.* 3. 2, 3, 4, 5. See my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 2. p. 21, &c.

Verse 5.

That chaunt to the sound of the Viol, and invent to themselves instruments of Musick, like David.

THe Prophet goes on, in aggravating the Sins of these loose, luxurious Rulers, who gave themselves up to mirth and merriment, to feasting, singing, and Musick, as if they had been continually at some Wedding, or celebrating some Feast to *Bacchus*; and that in a time of mourning, when Gods Wrath was upon the regions round about them, the inferiour people were in deep distress, and *Samaria* it self was ready to be made a prey by the cruel *Assyrian*; yet in this juncture of time, when they should have fallen to Prayers and Tears, they fall to mirth and merry-making, not bating an ace of their wonted pomp and pleasure; and therefore the Prophet goes on, in denouncing Gods Judgements against them, saying, *Woe to them that chaunt*, or quaver, as it is in the margin, *to the sound of the Viol*; They joyn their voyce to the Instrument, they play and sing.

Before they pleased their Palates, and now they delight their ears with Musical Instruments, that nothing might bee wanting to compleat their pleasures. *They sing to the mouth of the Viol* (so it is in the fountain) they curiously quaver, and sing their part in Consort; they form and frame their Tones, rising and falling according to the Tune, and Harmony of the Viol, or Psaltery, the word will beat both. It was an Instrument that was round and hollow, muuch like a bottle; and *Nebel* signifies a Bottle as well as a Viol. The Seventy call it Psalterion, and so the word is rendred, *Psal.* 33. 2. *Sing to the Lord with the Psaltery*, or Viol. Before they had luxurious feasts, and now they adde lascivious musick.

Happoretim, i.e. *qui particularizant ad os nabili, qui propria & particularia cantica concinunt, eaq; varia juxta varium concentum nabili*, à *Lapide. V. Leigh Critica S. in V. Poretim. p.* 195. *fol.*

The better to Patronize their prophane Musick, they bring in *David* for their pattern. *They invent Instruments of Musick* *Nullum vitium sine patrocinio.*

Quod exemplo fit, id jure fieri putant Cicero.

like David. *David* was a great Master of Musick, he invented many Musical Instruments, which hee used in Spiritual praising of God, and raising of his Spirit in his Worship, 1 *Chro.* 23. 5. But these abused their Musick, to the satisfying of their sinful lusts and pleasures, and that in an unseasonable time; as if they would out-face God, and his Judgements, and their prosperity should never change. Under the Viol, Synecdochically is comprehended other Musical Instruments then in use, as Harps, Sackbuts, Organs, Timbrels, Trumpets, Cymbals, &c. under one kind the rest are comprized; so saith the text, *They invent to themselves Instruments of Musick.* They were not content with one or two sorts of Instruments, but they invent variety of them, the better to gratifie their lusts. Plaine Musick pleaseth not them, but they beat their brains to get the most curious Organs and Instruments that can be gained for love, or money. They set their heads, and their hearts to work, that they might find out wayes to please their lusts.

Chasab, ex cogitavit, deliberavit, consultavit.

OBSERVATIONS.

V. Polydor. Virgil. de Invent. Rerum. l. 1. c. 14. Weemse Christian Synagog. ss. 6. p. 143.

1 *Abused Musick is displeasing to God.* Musick in it self is a good gift of God, *Gen.* 4. 21. and must be used to Gods glory, and not to gratifie our lusts. Epicures are all for mirth and Musick, for singing, feasting, dancing, and drinking, they have their portion in this life, and they care for no other.

Now Musick is abused when it is,
1 Excessive.
2 Unseasonable.
3 An incentive to Lust.
4 A promoter of Idolatry.

1 Musick is sinful when it is *Excessive*, when men give themselves up to mirth and Musick, neglecting the duties of their calling. These tempt the Temptor to destroy them, and sin against their owne Prayers, when they desire they may not be led into temptation, yet by such prophane courses they lead themselves into them.

2 When it is *unseasonable*; so here, in a time of mourning they fell to Musick, and drove the fear of God farre from them.

them. A woe is denounced against such, *Isa.* 5. 11, 12.

3 When it is made an *Incentive* unto Lust, and is used with drinking, dancing, feasting, dalliance and filthy Songs, jearing at Piety and pious men. Thus the Drunkards made Songs of *David*, *Psal.* 69. 12. and the Churches misery was their enemies musick, *Lam.* 3. 63. such kind of corrupt musick hath a great influence in corrupting mens manners.

Solent resp. cuti. Musica mutari. Plato de legib. lib. 2.

4 When it is used to *promote Idolatry*, Exod. 32. 18. *Dan.* 3. 5. Amos 5. 23. In Popery, the greatest part of their Divine Service is spent in Theatrical Musick, and singing of Anthems, where the peoples ears are tickled, but their hearts are never touched. St. *Austin* complains, that in his time hee was more taken with the Musick, than with the matter that was sung. Idolatry hath many props to uphold it, as the Authority of great men, glittering Pictures of Gold and Silver to please carnal eyes, and variety of Musick to tickle mens eares, and allure the ignorant, who have their minds in their eares, and are apt to admire what they never understand. They were Idolaters, who had the Cornet, Flute, Harp, Sackbut, Psaltery, Dulcimer, and all kind of Musick in their Worship, *Dan.* 3. 5.

V. D. Willet *Synops. p.* 683. *Edit. ult.*

Aug. Confes. l. 10. c. 33.

Apostolical simplicity suites best with Gospel-worship. *It is not the custom of our Churches* (saith *Justin Martyr*) *to sing their Meeters with any such kind of Instruments, but their manner is only Plain-songs*; and gives very good Reasons in the same place for it.

Justin Mart. Explic. Quæst. à Gentibus postarum. Quæst. 107. *p.* 446. See more in an excellent seasonable Sermon of Mr. *Pool* on Joh. 4. 24. preacht at *Pauls*, 1660.

Q. *But dee you condemn all manner of Musick?*

A. No, for Musick it self is not unlawful, but the abuse of it. We must therefore distinguish of Musick.

1 There is a *grave, composed, pious Musick*, by which contemplation is promoted, the affections are moved, sadness is expelled, the spirits are raised and revived, composed and fitted for Gods Service and praise; and to this end the most pious and noble spirited men have used it; as *Moses*, Exod. 15. *Deborah*, Judg. 5. *Hezekiah*, Isa. 38. 20. *Jehosaphat*, 2 Chron. 22. 27, 28. the Levites, *Nehem.* 12. 27. 1 *Chron.* 9. 33. and the Saints, *Revel.* 14. 2, 3. Thus *Elisha* called for a Minstrel, 2 *King.* 3. 15. the better to quiet and compose his spirit, which had been disquieted by a wicked King; and to stir

V. Cassiodor. l. 2. Epist. 40. *Aristot.* in Polit. l. 8 c. 3. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. *Plato de Rep.* Dialog. 3.

stir it up in praying and praising God, that so he might be the fitter for Prophecy, and the duties of his calling, and to receive what God should reveal unto him; and for this end the Prophets also used it, 1 *Sam.* 10. 5. Thus *David* used it, and commanded it to be used in praising God, 2 *Sam.* 6. 5. 2 *Chron.* 5. 12. *Psal.* 150. As prophane Musick delights the Devil, and lets him into the soul, so holy Musick and singing is like a scourge to drive Satan out of our hearts and houses. When the evil spirit vexed *Saul* with sadness and melancholy, *David* with his Harp helpt to drive it away, 1 *Sam.* 16. 23.

2. *There is a light, loose, lustful, prophane, emasculating Musick*, whereby the corruptions which are in the heart are excited, and the fear of God is expelled. *Job* brings in the wicked with their Timbrel and Harp, rejoycing at the sound of the Organ, *Job* 21. 12, 13. Against such the Prophet denounceth a Woe, *Isa.* 5. 11, 12. and 24. 8, 9.

The Philosopher told the Fidlers, that he could be merry without such musick, much more may Christians say so. St. *Jerom* saith, *Let the finger be thrust out of thy house as noxious, expel out of thy doors all Fidlers, Singing-women, with all this Quire of the Devil, as the deadly songs of* Syrens. So *Chrysostom*, *Cymbals, and Pipes, and filthy songs, are the very Pomps and Hodg-potch of the Devil. Antigonus*, Master to *Alexander* the Great, hearing his Scholar sing, he broke his Harp, and threw it away, saying, *Ætati tuæ jam regnare convenit, non canere*; 'Tis time for you now to reign, and not to sing. The former sort of musick in private may be useful, but this latter sort is odious and abominable.

Hieron. Epist. 10. ad Furiam.

Chrysost. Hom. 42. in Acta.

Obj. *We read of Harps, Timbrels, Organs, and other Instruments of musick used by the Jews in their publick worship of God, as appears by the Titles of many Psalms,* Psal. 4. *and* 5. *and* 6. *and* 8, 45, 54, 60, 61, 67, 69, 70, 80, 81, 150. *and therefore wee may use Musick now in Gospel-times.*

Answ. It doth not follow, for there were many *Ceremonial Rites* used in the time of the Law, which are abolisht in the time of the Gospel, of which this is one. The Church was in its infancy in Old Testament-times, and therefore the Lord allured them to his worship by external Rites and Ceremonies, which by the coming of Christ are abolished, the *Substance*,

stance being come, the *Shadows* are gone. The Gospel calls for a plain, simple, spiritual worship, *John* 4. 23, 24.

As for the Musick of the Temple, it was typical, and prefigured the joy of Gods people in the remission of their sins in Gospel-times.

There was both Precept and President in the Old Testament for Musick in the publick worship of God, 2 *Chron.* 29. 25. and 2. 7, 6. But there is no Precept nor President in all the New Testament for the use of Organs, or any Musical Instruments in the publick worship of God in these Gospel-times, that ever I could see; They were not used in publick worship in the Primitive times, as I have shewed before out of *Justin Martyr*. Organs were brought into the Church (say some) by Pope *Vitalian*, or *Vitellius*, about the year 660. Hee was a lusty Singer, and great Musician, he brought Prick-song, Descant, and all kinde of pleasant Melody into the Church; and the better to delight vain people, he joyned Organs to his singing. Thus was *Paul*'s Preaching, and *Peter*'s Praying turned into vain singing, and childish playing, to the great loss of time, and utter undoing of many mens souls.

V. de Croy Conform. 1. *chap.* 26. *p.* 62. *Alexand. ab Alex. lib.* 4. *c.* 17.

Alredus an Abbot in *Yorkshire*, about the year 1160, inveys notably against *Popish Musicians*; All types and figures now ceasing (saith he) whence hath the Church so many Organs, and Musical Instruments? To what purpose is that terrible blowing of Bellows, expressing rather the cracks of Thunder, than the sweetness of a voice. To what purpose serves that contraction and inflection of the voice? This man sings a base, that a small tune, this a treble, that a divid, &c. So that poor people come not to an Oratory, but to a Theater; not to pray, but to gaze about them; neither is that dreadful Majesty feared before whom they stand, &c.

In his *Speculum Charitatis*, *l.* 2. *c.* 23. *Papistus, totus Organis & Musicis cantibus perstrepens, dat sine mente sonum. Danæus.*

Cornelius Agrippa complaining of the men of his time, tells us, *That it was more like the lowing of beasts, than the voice of men; whilst the Choristers ney descant, like a sort of Colts; others bellow a tenor, like a company of Oxen; others bark a Counter-point; like a kennel of Doggs; others roar a treble, like a sort of Bulls; others grunt out a base, like a company of Hoggs; so that a foul, ill-favoured noise is made; but the matter is not understood.* Thus he.

In lib. de Vanitat. Scient. c. 17. *Boantes potius quàm Orantes. Pet. Martyr.*

'Tis clear against the Rule, which commands, *That all*

things should be done to edification, and with understanding, 1 Cor. 14. 19. but such a hideous noise breeds confusion, as is apparent in Popery, and is condemned by all our learned Modern Divines.

Pacessant superstitiosi boatus Papistarum, qui Psalmos in Templis reboantes Musicâ Theatrali sed linguâ non intellectâ tanto strepitu & tumultu ut si mereretur linguâ Vernacula, nemo tamen quid ab illis dicatur intelligat. Pet. Martyr.

2. The Organs used by *David* differed much from ours; Theirs were κρουστὰ *Pulsatilia*, such as the Harp, Viol, &c. which they plaid upon with the Quill, or with the fingers; they were not ἐμπνευστὰ, *flatilia*, such as our Organs are, which are acted by wind. *Jubal* was called the Father of such as handle the Organ, *Gen.* 4. 21. hee was the first Inventor of Musical Instruments; where by the Organ is not meant such Organs as are used in our daies, which were invented some thousands of years after, but 'twas an Instrument of joy then in use, as appears. *Job* 21. 12. *and* 30. 31. *Psal.* 150.

Organorum species hujusmodi est, canora, cithara, decem chordis coaptata, & hac cum plectro percutitur. Nebla verò duodecim sonos habens, digitis tangitur, & reliqua. Hinc perspicere licet istiusmodi Organa à David confecta, diversa fuisse à nostris, &c. Polyd. Virgil. de Invent. Rerum. lib. 1. cap. 15. mihi p. 52.

4. *De Croy* fetcheth the Original of Church-Musick from the Heathen, it was practised in *Numa Pompilius* his time, which was above one thousand years before Pope *Vitalian*, as appears by *Ovid*.

Cantabat fœnis, cantabat tibia Indis, cantabat mœstis tibia funeribus. Ovid. Fast. l. 6. V. De Croy Conformit. Tech. 26.

Object. *This is but some novel opinion of some Precise persons.*

Answ. Such kinde of Church-Musick was not used in the Church, in *Justin Martyrs* time, who lived in the first Century. *Bellarmine* confesseth that for 820 years after Christ, the Church wanted it. Had such Organical Musick been necessary and useful, in all probability it would have found a speedier admission into the Church. Hence 'tis that the wiser sort of Papists have condemned it, as Judaizing. So did *Aquinas*, and Cardinal *Cajetan* on *Aquinas*, and in his Commentary on 1 *Cor.* 14. 19. and the Jesuit *Salmeron* on the same place. Yea the Jesuit *de Valentia* tells us expresly, that in *Aquinas* his time, which was about 1270 years after Christ,

Bellarm. de bonis operibus lib. 1. c. 29. V. Altare Damascenum. p. 490. &c. Et Bodium in Ephes. 5. 19. Et Danæum de Precatione cap. 3. p. 618. folio. Et Tiberni. Synt. p. 793.

Christ. Musical Instruments were not used in the Church, for fear least they should seem to Judaize. That curiosity of singing and quavering, so that the matter which is sung cannot be understood, is condemned by the Learned *Hooker*, and by Queen *Elizabeth*, Injunct. 49. and by the Homily of the Place and Time of Prayer, Part 2. p. 131. where *such chanting and playing on Organs, is said to have displeased God sore, and filthily defiled his house and place of prayer, and that for it justly he destroyed many Nations*; and if this kinde of worship were of absolute necessity, then not onely Cathedrals, but all Churches and Chappels were bound to get it. Latin service, I suppose, is abhorred by all, but this kinde of chanting, when people know not whether men curse or bless, wherein is it better?

Musica Instrumenta magis animum movent ad delectationem, quam per ea formetur interius bona dispositio. In veteri autem Testamento usus erat talium Instrumentorum quia populus erat magis durus & carnalis; unde erat per hujusmodi Instrumenta provocandus, sicut & per promissiones terrenas, tum etiam quia per hujusmodi Instrumenta corporalia aliquid figurabant. Aquinas 2a. 2a. q. 91. art. 2.

Hooker Eccles. Polit. p. 259.

Caution, yet this must not take away *Vocal Musick*, which is still to be practised by Gods people in the solemn Assemblies. The melody of the heart and voice is the sweetest harmony in Gods ear. This is Apostolical, and is oft commanded 1 *Cor.* 14. 15, 26. *Ephes.* 5. 19. *Col.* 3. 16. *James* 5. 13. Twas practised by Christ himself, *Mat.* 26. 30. and by the Primitive Christians in *Trajan* the Emperours time, whilst St. *John* the Evangelist lived. When ever the people of God received any signal mercy, they presently framed it into a song of praise, that they might the better remember it, *Numb.* 21. 17. *Deut.* 31. 19. *Judg.* 5. Yea many portions of Scripture were put into songs, as the book of *Job*, *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, *Solomons Song*. Singing of Psalms is an antient Ordinance practised by Saints, both in the Old and New Testament. Holy singing is an excellent means to scatter the Devils temptations, to allay passions, and to make us couragious in Gods wayes. When wee are dull and heavy, this is a means to quicken our affections, and refresh our spirits. *Be not drunk with Wine, but be filled with the Spirit.* How? by singing of spiritual songs in a spiritual

Quinque metris constant, Job, David, tres Solomonis. Greg. Nazian.

Simplex cantio cogitationes malas demolitur, mentem ad fructificationem divinarum rigat, Pietatis decertatores generosos & fortes per constantiam in rebus adversis efficit; omnium rerum quæ in vita tristes accidunt, piis affert medicinam Just. Martyr. Quæst. 1. ad Orthod. 107. mihi p. 462.

ritual manner, *Ephes.* 5. 18, 19. *Paul* and *Silas* the better to quicken and comfort themselves in Prison, sing Psalmes there, *Acts* 16. 25. In the Psalme that is intituled for the Sabbath, *Psal.* 92. 1, 2, the Psalmist tells us, *it is good to praise the Lord, and to sing to the name of the most high.* God delights to see his people practise this Ordinance, he is not only pleased with the Prayers, but also with the Praises of his people; and gives them victory not only for Prayers, but for *Praises* also, 2 *Chron.* 20. 21, 22. When the Ark was brought into the Temple with singing, it is said, *The glory of the Lord filled the house*, 2 Chron. 5. 13.

Woe then to those that glory in their shame, *viz.* in singing prophane, filthy, obscene Songs; but are ashamed of their glory, *viz.* of singing the Songs of *Sion*, which is not only our duty, but our glory; not a burden, but a blessing; not only a service, but an Angelical priviledge; yet how many dare not sing a Psalm in their Families, for fear of reproach and suffering? Christ will be ashamed of such as are ashamed of him, and his Worship, and will shut them out of Heaven, that fear men more than him, *Mark* 8. *ult. Revelations* 21. 8.

We must begin our Heaven here, if ever we will sing with the Saints in glory hereafter, *Revel.* 14. 3. & 15. 3. They that will not sing here, must howl hereafter. Our Tongues are called our glory, and we cannot use them better, than in glorifying God with them.

That we may perform this Duty rightly,

Wee must doe it
1. Understandingly.
2. Affectionately.
3. Religiously.
4. Decently.

1. We must sing with the Spirit, and with *understanding*, *Psal.* 47. 7. 1 *Cor.* 14. 15. Many sing, but understand not a word of what is Sung. God abhors such blind sacrifices. It is reasonable service that he requires, *Rom.* 12. 1.

2. *Affectionately*, with grace in the heart, *Col.* 3. 16. that is, we must exercise the graces of the Spirit in singing, wee must sing with joy, faith, fear. We must act the graces of the Spirit in singing; when we sing of *Judgements*, we must trem-

ble,

ble; when of *Promises*, beleeve; when of *Commandements*, obey. This is to sing *Davids* Psalmes with *Davids* Spirit. Get your spirits tuned, and framed to what is Sung, that it may not be a Carnal, but a Spiritual Song. Hence *David* used to tune, and prepare his heart before he sang, *Psal.* 57. 8, 9. Heart and Voyce must goe together. Singing with Musick in Publick was Ceremonial, and Typical, it is now gone; but singing with Heart and Voyce is Moral, and perpetual. Wee should therefore labour rather to get our hearts affected with the matter, than our ears and senses with the manner of singing.

Non aliud cogites, & aliud cantes. Bern.

3 *Religiously.* To the Lord, and not to Saints must we sing praise, and it must be done (as all other Duties) with reverence, as in Gods presence.

4 *Decently.* As all other Duties must be done decently, and in order, so must this, 1 *Cor.* 11. *ult.* As all curiosity, Quavering, and Vain-descants must be avoyded; so rudeness, disorder, and confusion must be shunned. We must observe the Tune, and joyn all together as one man in the Duty, as those Singers did, 2 *Chron.* 5. 13. with the voyce all together must we sing unto God, *Esay* 52. 8.

Non est strepitus oris, sed Jubilus cordis, non sonus labiorum, sed motus gaudiorum; voluntatum, non vocum consonantia. Bern.

[See more about singing of Psalmes, and all Cavils answered, by Master *Cotton*, in his Treatise for singing of Psalmes: and Mr. *Sydnam*, in his Treatise of Infants Baptism, p. 165. Mr. *Manton* on *James* 5. 13. *Downams* Guide to Godliness, l. 3. c. 17. p. 240. Mr. *Ambrose* his Media. p. 259. M. *Eaton* against the Quakers, p. 25. *Clapham* against the Quakers, in the end of his Treatise against them. Mr. *Philip Goodwin*, in his Family-Religion, p. 269, &c. Mr. *Sam. Cradocks* Knowledge and Practise, Part 2. Cha. 6. p. 340. *Zanchy* in Ephes. 5. 19, 20.]

2 Obs. *Wicked men are apt to abuse the Practices, and Examples of Gods people.*

Sometimes they take offence, and stumble at their infirmities, and falls, which should be a means to keep them from falling. Sometimes they imitate their good actions, but then they do it in an evil manner, and to an evil end; if *David* dance before the Ark, then the wicked will dance before *Dagon*, and wrest that * purely zealous act of *David*, to Patronize mixt dancing. If *David* set up Musick to praise God, they will set up

V. Dyke, Deceitfulness of the Heart, c. 12. p. 147. *Bis peccat, qui exemplo peccat.*

* *Magis miror David saltantem, quam pugnantem. Greg*

Luke 7. 46. And another that poured a box of precious Oyntment upon his head, *Mat.* 26. 7. to 13. 'Twas used much by the Jews at their Feasts and Funerals, *Luk.* 23. 56. but now in Gospel-times, and especially in our cold Countries, 'tis out of use.

The thing in it self was good, for God gives * Wine and Oyl to delight us, *Psal.* 104. 15. *Job* 29. 6. *Prov.* 27. 9. And therefore the Prophet doth not here simply condemn the use, but the abuse of these things. He blames them for their riot and excesse; they must have Wine in great bowls; and the * *first or top of the Oyl*, that is, they must have the best and costliest Oyntment, not for necessity, but for luxury and lust; and that in a time when Gods judgements were on the Regions round about them, and many were gone into captivity; yet they are not at all moved with it, but go on securely in their mirth and merriment, without any sympathy of the afflictions of *Joseph*, for so it follows.

* *Non est eorum usus omninò expellendus, sed unguento tanquam medicamento, & auxilio utendum est, ad vires languentes excitandas. Terbul. Pædagog. lib. 2. cap. 8.*

* *Reshith* (from *Rosh caput*) *Shemanim primitiis olearum ungunt sese, i. e. lectissimo & præstantissimo unguentorum, idque ad luxum non ad munditiem aut sanitatem.*

But they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.

This *But* is a sore blot upon them, let *Joseph* sink or swim, yet they are not broken in spirit for the breaches of *Joseph*; they have no pain, fellow-feeling, or heart-grief for the oppression of their brethren, or for those calamities past or present, which were upon them.

Nechlu, from *Chulah*, *doluit, ægrotavit, animo tristis fuit.*

Some take this affliction to be that particular breach, and great rupture which the *Syrians* made amongst them, when they had broken them to shivers (as the word imports) as appears, 1 *King.* 13. 4. 22. and 14. 26. Their affliction was bitter, for there was none shut up, nor any help left; many were slain, and many carried into captivity.

Gnal Sheber, pro confractione Joseph, i. e. populi Israelitici. Met. effic. & Syn. partis.

Though this be a truth, yet 'tis better taking the words in a larger sense, *viz.* for all those afflictions which the house of *Joseph* suffered (which was a type of the Church) by their corrupt Judges at home, and by the cruel *Syrians*, and merciless *Assyrians*, abroad. They had endured much already, and were like to suffer more; yet these secure, vitious, voluptuous Rulers laid it not to heart.

By

By *Joseph* here, is more especially meant the Ten Tribes, or the whole Kingdome of *Israel*, so the word is used, *Psal.* 77. 15. and 80. 1. *Amos* 5. 6, 15. *Hear O thou Shepherd of* Israel, *i. e.* of the Ten Tribes, which are synecdochically called *Joseph*. 1. In respect of Dignity, and the right of Primogeniture, which was taken from *Reuben*, and given to *Joseph*, the best of *Jacobs* sons, and a principal Patriarch, *Gen.* 48. 16, 22. 1 *Chron.* 5. 1. 2. Because of *Jeroboam*, the first King of the Ten Tribes, who was of the posterity of *Joseph*. 3. The Prophet seems to allude to the history of *Joseph*, who was cast into a pit by his brethren, and after sold to the *Midianites* for a slave, his brethren in the mean time, eating, drinking, feasting, and little regarding the misery and anguish that *Joseph* was in, *Gen.* 37. 23, 24, 25, 27.

Joseph, pro quovis fratre hic ponitur, quia inter fratres Joseph fuit celebris, vel propter mala quæ pendit, vel propter bona quæ rependit. Aug. de Doct. Christ. lib. 4. cap. 7.

The summe of all is this, *Though your Brethren, the seed of* Joseph, *be in great distress, and even broken in peeces with Violence and oppression, which might have made them even sick with sorrow; yet such is your inhumanity, that you have given up your selves to all Intemperance and sensual delights, pouring down Wine out of your carousing-cups, and anointing your selves with the most precious and fragrant Ointments, without any minding of your brethrens miseries, or once regarding their doleful condition.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Voluptuous men spare for no cost or pains to gratifie their lusts.*

These men rent to *India* for Ivory, to the folds for the fattest; they provided musick to please the ear, odoriferous perfumes and oyntments for the smell; the fat and sweet for their palats, and fine beds for their lusts. Here is all for self, nothing for God that gives all, he is not in any of their thoughts, *Isa.* 57. 8, 9. When the Kingdome of Heaven should suffer violence by them, they are violent for sin; they lavish gold out of the bag for it, *Isa.* 46. 6. every one acts in his sphear for Idols; *The Children gather wood, the Fathers kindle the fire, and the Women knead the dough*, Jer. 7. 18. so great is their affection to Idolatry, that every one in the

Otiosus nemo in amantis domo. Gen. 18. 6, 7, 8.

the family confers something, and acts that part which is most proper for him; 'tis for Children to gather sticks, for men to make the fire, and Women to bake; The like industry for Idols, we may see, *Isa.* 41. 7. and 44. 12, 13, 14. Wicked men delight only in sensual things, which makes them so active for them. They delight in eating, drinking, anointing, in silk, sattins, purple, pearls, marble, &c. See what a shop of such wares mystical *Babylon* hath, *Rev.* 18. 12, 13, 14. Great men have many great advantages of good education, wealth, time, power and reputation, which they should improve to the doners glory, and not fight against God with his own Treasure. As is excellently set forth in that elaborate Tract, stiled, The Gentlemans Calling.

2. *Ministers must have a special eye upon the manners of their people.*

See how the Prophet here chargeth this people with their excessive and inordinate eating, drinking, anointings, musick, &c. If a Minister do but touch upon these things, how apt are people to cry, what? may we not eat, drink, and play as we please? no, you may not; for you may perish by the use of lawful things, if you use them unlawfully.

We Ministers are *Watchmen*, and must see that our people go not astray in manners, as well as in doctrine; and therefore when the Prophet *Isaiah* had reproved the men for their sins, hee then sets forth his Looking-glass for women, *Isa.* 3. 16, &c. and gives us an Inventory of the females vanity, setting them forth in their colours from top to toe.

3. *There is a woe hangs over the heads of drunkards.*

Woe to them that drink Wine in bowls, till they have besotted themselves, and are made insensible of Gods judgements on themselves and others. Every Prophet hath a woe against such. *Woe*, saith *Isa. chap.* 5. 11, 12. And, *Woe*, saith *Joel*, *chap.* 2. 5. And, *Woe*, saith *Habakkuk*, *chap.* 2. 15, 16. Drunkenness blots the name, consumes the body, and destroyes the soul, as I have shewed at large elsewhere.

See my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 3. P. 92, 93, &c.

4. *Lawful things when abused become unlawful.*

Feasting in it self is lawful, but feasting in a time of mourning is unlawful. Wine and Oyle are things in themselves lawful; and may be used moderately for necessity and delight, to refresh and fit us for the service of God, but not for Luxury,

See my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 3. P. 99. &c.

ry, *Judg.* 9. 13. *Psal.* 104. 15. 1 *Tim.* 5. 23. Thus the Saints used them (as I have shewed before in the Explication) but to abuse them to lust and luxury, is a great provocation, *Prov.* 7. 19. *Ezek.* 23. 41.

5. *Luxury brings forth cruelty.*

Where riot and excess go before, there cruelty, inhumanity, oppression, and contempt of Gods people follows. This we see in the *Sodomites*, Ezek. 16. 49. And those voluptuous wantons, *James* 5. 5, 6. As piety makes men pitiful, hence good men are called *Chasidim*, *misericordes*, merciful men; such was *David*, *Job*, *Zacheus*, &c. so impiety breeds cruelty, as we see in *Nabal*, *Dives*, &c. So true is that of *Pythagoras*; *first* (saith he) *Pleasures and pastimes creep into Cities, then luxury and satiety, after that violence and cruelty, and then destruction.* Hence *Solomon* condemns luxury especially in Great ones, as that which makes them pervert judgement, *Prov.* 31. 4. *Eccles.* 10. 16. Apud. Laert. lib. 7.

6. *To be feasting in a time of fasting, and singing in a time of sorrowing, is a God-provoking sin*, Isa. 22. 12. Joel 2. 16, 17. James 5. 1, 5.

Here is a woe set upon the heads of those that laugh when *Sion* weeps, for this woe must be applied to all that went before, *Vers.* 1, 3, 4, 5, 6. *Woe to them that are at ease in* Sion, *but they are not grieved for the afflictions of* Joseph. *Woe to them that eat, and drink, and sing, but they are not grieved for the affliction of* Joseph; This is the burden of this doleful Ditty, that they did not mourn in a time of mourning, nor once take notice of Gods anger, which yet they could not but see was kindled round about them, and ready to seize upon them, as it did suddenly after. Many are so stupid, that they will not bate a lust or a pleasure, though Gods people be in never so deep distress; like the King and *Haman*, that sate sotting and carousing, when Gods people were in great perplexity, *Hest.* 3. *ult.* To such I may say, as *Elisha* said to *Gehazi*, 2 King. 5. 26. *Is this a time to receive gifts and garments, Olive-yards and Vineyards? the Leprosie therefore of* Naaman *shall cleave to thee, and to thy seed for ever.* So say I, Is this a time to drink healths, to rant, to dance, and roar, when the Church of God, like *Joseph*, is sold, imprisoned, massacred, and murdered? will not the Lord visite for these things, and shall not

his soul bee avenged on such a Nation as this?

7. *God takes notice of our sins of omission, as well as of our sins of commission.*

'Tis not sufficient that we do not oppress or spoil Gods people, but 'tis our sin, and we must answer for it, if we be not grieved when they grieve, and weep not when they weep. *Dives* did not rob *Lazarus*, but he went to Hell for not relieving him, *Luk.* 16. 29, &c. and at the last day men must answer, not onely for oppressing the poor, but for not succouring them, and sympathizing with them, *Mat.* 25. 41, 42. No praying, no reading, no hearing, may bring a man to Hell, as well as an irreverent and formal performance of these duties.

8. *'Tis our duty to sympathize with Gods people in their miseries.*

God hates a stoicall apathy; he commands us to remember those that are in bonds, as bound with them, *Heb.* 13. 3. And to weep with them that weep, as well as to rejoyce with them that rejoyce, *Rom.* 12. 15. And to shew pity and compassion to our Brethren, *Zach.* 7. 8, 9, 10. 1 *Pet.* 3. 8. And as 'tis *commanded*, so 'tis *commended* to us by the Example of Gods servants, who have over-lookt their personal comforts, when the publick hath sate in sorrow. Thus *Moses*, though he lived at Court amidst all the delights of *Egypt*, yet hearing that Gods people were in distress, hee leaves all, and joyns himself to the people of God, *chusing rather to suffer affliction with them, than to injoy the pleasures of sin for a season*, Heb. 11. 24, 25. *Hester* so far sympathized with Gods people in their misery, that she ventured her life for their preservation. Good *Mordecai* was very much troubled at their troubles, *Hest.* 4. 1, 2. and gracious *Nehemiah*, though he was cup-bearer to the King, lived at Court, and wanted for nothing, yet see how deeply hee was affected with the afflictions of Gods people, *Neh.* 1. 4, &c. So holy *Daniel* searching the Prophecies of *Jeremiah*, and thereby fore-seeing the calamities that were coming on the Church, though himself were advanced to honour, and made a chief President of the whole State; yet he could not but mourn, even till he fainted again with sorrow, and was sick, *Dan.* 8. 27. and 9. 3. and 10. 2, 3. Thus honest-hearted *Uriah* denied himself in point of lawful liberties, and cannot rest nor sleep at home in peace, when the Ark and *Israel* are in danger, 2 *Sam.* 11. 11. *Jeremy* was a man

See more in Mr. *Brinsly's* Ser. on Psal. 14. *ult.* & Mr. *Case* on Psal. 94. 12. p. 5, 6, 7, &c.

When the Emperor bid *Terentius* ask what he pleased, and hee should have it; *Templum petiit pro Orthodoxis.*

man of large affections this way, *Jer.* 9. 1. and 13. 17. and 30. 7. and writes a whole Book of *Lamentations* for the Church. *David*, though himself had many troubles, yet in the midst of them all hee desires the Lord to redeem *Israel* out of all its troubles, *Psal.* 25. *ult.* And desires an heavy imprecation against himself, if he prefer not *Jerusalem* to his chiefest joy, *Psal.* 137. 5, 6. Hee owns Gods Church, and sides with her, and prayes for her, though she were in *Babylon*, *vers.* 1, 7. *Paul* had a care of all the Churches, and wisheth their prosperity in every place, and could be content to be accursed, so they might be blessed, *Rom.* 1. 9, 10. 2 *Cor.* 11. 26. We have two notable instances for this purpose in *Eli*, *and the wife of* Phinehas, 1 *Sam.* 4. 18. *Israel* is fled before the Philistims, that was one stab. 2. There is a great slaughter amongst the people, that is a second. 3. Thy two sons are slain, that is a third. But when he heard that the Ark of God was taken, it broke his heart, and his neck together. So *the wife of* Phinehas, the death of her Father-in-Law, and the death of her Husband, must needs affect her, but the loss of the Ark affects her more neerly, and therefore she doubles that, *The glory is departed from Israel, and the Ark of God is taken*; and she names her childe *Ichabod*, that is, *there is no glory*, seeing the Ark, which was the glory of *Israel*, and a sign of Gods special presence amongst his people, was gone, she took pleasure in nothing, *q. d. All the glory and excellency of* Israel *is now taken away from us, since the Ark is gone, which brought such glory and renown to* Israel.

Christ himself, how tender was he over his Church and People? he comforts them, he counsels them, and before he dyes, he makes an excellent prayer for them, *Joh.* 14. 15, 16, 17. Many will be companions with Gods People in their Exaltation, but St. *John* was their companion and brother even in affliction, *Rev.* 1. 9.

Gods People are men of publick spirits; they serve not themselves, but God and his Church in their Generation, *Act.* 13. 3, 6. *Paul* spent himself for the People of God. They can pass thorow honour and dishonour, profit and disprofit, be any thing or nothing, so God may be glorified, and his People edified. They are living members of Christs mystical body; now 'tis natural for the members of the body to

seek the good of each other, and if one member suffer, all the rest sympathize.

Besides, *the Church is neer and dear to God*, and therefore ought to be precious in our eyes; it is his *Benjamin*, *Joseph* loved all his Brethren, but he loved *Benjamin* with a more intensive love, and provides a double Mess for him. God loves all his Creatures, but his Church is his *Spouse*, his *Love*, his *Glory*, *the apple of his eye*; he reproves Kings for their sakes, and plagues Nations for opposing them, as *Ægypt*, *Moab*, *Ammon*, *Edom*, *Tyre*, &c. In all their afflictions he is afflicted, and if the poorest Saint suffer, their head is presently sensible of it. Saul, Saul, *why persecutest thou me?* Now as the Church is dear to God, so it is to the People of God, who in their degree and measure doe imitate their heavenly Father, sympathizing with his people in their distresses. We all prize *excellent things*, now the godly are the only excellent ones of the earth, *Psal.* 16. 3. They are of *the Blood Royal*; Christ is flesh of their flesh, he hath made them Kings, and Priests: No Pedigree like the Churches Pedigree, *She is Jerusalem above*, and is the Mother that nurseth and feedeth us all with the Bread of Life, *Gal.* 4. 26. They are the pillars of the earth, the stay and strength of Nations; as *Samsons* strength lay in his hair, so the strength of Kingdoms lies in these. *Lot* was a means to preserve *Sodom*, and till he was gone out of it, it could not be destroyed, *Gen.* 19. The world endures for their sakes, and fares the better for them every day. So long as the Chaff is mixt with the Wheat, it is preserved from burning, but when the Wheat is gone, the Tares are soon consumed. These are *precious* in Gods eye; their *Persons* are precious, *Mal.* 3. 17. their *Prayers* are precious, *Cant.* 2. 14. their *Tears* are precious, *Psal.* 56. 8. their *Desires* are precious, *Psal.* 10. 17. their *Names* are precious, and their *Death* is precious, *Psal.* 112. 6. & 116. 15.

Now if we must pray for all men, even for *Pagans*, then much more for these precious ones; if we must pray for our enemies, *Matth.* 5. 44. and must be affected with their miseries, *Psal.* 35. 13, 14. then much more for our friends. If the Prophet wept for *Moab*, and *Babylon*, what should wee doe for *Zion*? Esay 16. 11. and if *Abraham* were so importunate for wicked *Sodom*, and all the people must lament for

Nadab,

Nadab, and *Abihu*, two notorious wicked men, who perisht for their Sin, *Levit.* 10. 6. how tender should we be of *Sion*? and if we must sympathize, and be sensible of the sorrowes of a particular good man, *Job* 2. 13. how much more when a community of good men suffers? And if Gods Servants have been affected with Impendent Judgements, that were but in the Clouds, and afarre off, how should we bee affected with the present miseries of Gods people? When *Elisha* fore-saw the evil that *Hazael* would doe to *Israel*, some years after, he wept; and *Daniel*, ch. 8. 11, 12, 13. fore-seeing the misery which would come upon *Jerusalem* two hundred years after his death: he was even sick with sorrow, *vers.* 27. How would those Saints have wept in our dayes, to have seen these present, real evils, which press, and oppresse the people of God.

To incourage us, let us know that this work never goes unrewarded. God takes the kindness we shew to his people as done to himself, he is fed, when they are fed, *Matth.* 25. 35, 36. The *Kenites* kindness unto *Israel* was rewarded four hundred years after, 1. *Sam.* 15. 6. Wee never please God better, than when we seek the good of his people; though we forget such labour of love, yet he will not, *Heb.* 6. 10. *Laban* was blest for *Jacobs* sake, and *Pharaoh* for *Josephs*; *Rahab* that hid the Spies, was hid her self; *Obadiah*, that sheltred the Prophets of the Lord, was himself sheltred by God. *Ebedmelech* for the kindness which he shewed to *Jeremy*, had his life for a prey. God hath a Book of remembrance, wherein he records all that we doe for him, or his, *Mal.* 3. 16.

How sad then is the condition of those that are sensless, and regardless of *Sions* miseries? So themselves can but live in wealth and ease, they never regard the afflictions of *Joseph*; like *Gallio*, they care for no such matters. Christ looks upon such Luke-warm Newters as his profest enemies, he that is not with him is against him, *Matth* 12. 30. and *Meroz* was cursed, not for hurting, but for not helping Gods people in their troubles, *Judg.* 5. 23. and so was *Edom*; Obad. 11, 12, 13, &c.

Against such, see six Reasons in Mr. Gataker's Serm. on Amos 6. 6. p. 59, &c. 2. Part, folio. And M. Pringle. his Ser. on Psa. 125. 4. p. 21, &c.

But most sad is the condition of those, that instead of praying for Gods people, they persecute them, and adde affliction to the afflictions of those whom he hath wounded. These may forget

forget their owne cruelty, but God will not; he hath not only said, but sworn it, that he will not forget their cruelty, *Amos* 8. 7. He punisht *Amalek* four hundred years after, for his inhumanity towards *Israel*, 1 Sam. 15. 2,3. In all Ages God hath shewed himself terrible to such, he will spoyl the spoylers of his People. If *Pharaoh* pursue *Israel*, God will pursue him, If *Edom* shed *Israels* bloud, God will have *Edoms* bloud, *Ezek.* 35.

See my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 12. p. 218, &c.

Let us then every one sympathize with *Sion*, and give the Lord no rest, till he make our *Jerusalem* the praise of the earth, *Isa.* 62. 1. Every one in his place must help, and doe something for Gods afflicted *Joseph*. Those that can pray, must pray; those that are in Power and Authority, and have parts, must assist in their places; Souldiers that can fight, must fight for Gods Church. At the building of the Tabernacle every one did something. In the body Natural, each part is serviceable to the head. The Church of Christ throughout the Christian World is in deep distress, and cryes as the men of *Macedonia* did, *Come, and help us*. Let us therefore by our Prayers, and Tears, come forth to the help of the Lord against the mighty. Inquire how it fares with *Sion* (as *Eli* and *Nehemiah* did, 1 *Sam.* 4. 13. *Neh.* 1. 2.) and then pray for them accordingly, *Psal.* 122. 6. *Isa.* 45. 11. *Jer.* 51. 50. Get *affectionate desires*, Psal. 14. ult. Isa. 64. 1. *Affectionate prayers*, Psal. 25. ult. & 51. 18. and *Affectionate endeavours* in your places, as Magistrates, Ministers, &c. for the good of *Sion* here, and then you shall rejoyce with *Sion* hereafter.

See four Duties which God requires of us in his peoples troubles. *Gataker* on Amos 6. 6. p. 63, 64.

VERSE 7.

Therefore shall they goe Captive with the first that goe Captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed.

WE have before seen *the Sin* of the Rulers of *Israel*, we are now come to the several branches of their *Punishment*, whereof the first is Captivity, and deportation out of their owne Land. The Lord had borne long with them, and waited many years for their returne, but they abused his Patience, and turned his grace into wantonness, and therefore

fore now he is resolved to put an end to all their Pastimes and pleasures.

In this Verse we have, 1. A *Judgement* threatned, and that is Captivity, *Yee shall goe into captivity.*

2 Here are the *Persons* which must goe into Captivity, and those are the secure Grandees, and Voluptuous Rulers of *Israel*, *They shall goe Captive with the first that goe Captive*, of the Inhabitants of those Cities, for the Country was spoyled, and many of them captivated before. But the Rulers who were the prime offendors, and had been first in sin, should now bee first in punishment. They shall have the primacy amongst the Captives, they shall goe in the front of them, and lead them the way into Captivity. As in Dignity and Luxury they went before others, so now they shall have precedency in Punishment; as you may see, 2 *King.* 17. Before they were all for the head of the Oyntments, and now they should have the head in Punishment. They must have the head and chief delights, and now they shall have the head and chief of sorrows.

3 Here is the *Time* when they should goe into Captivity, and that is suddenly. *Now* shall they goe, *i. e.* it shall not be long, but the *Assyrian* shall carry them out of their owne Land into Captivity; in Gods due time it shall come to pass. It was about sixty years after that the Captivity came, which was but a short time comparatively, it is said even now to come upon them, because Gods decrees are sure, and what he determines to doe, is as sure as if it were already done. Thus to shew the certainty of *Babylons* downfall, it is said, *Babylon is fallen*, *Revel.* 14. 8. that is, It shall as certainly be destroyed, as if it were already done. Her fall is decreed by God, and is already begun in the hearts of Gods people, and shall from henceforth be more and more advanced, till it be utterly destroyed. So the Lord had decreed the Captivity of this People, and exercised them with variety of Afflictions, by the *Syrians*, and *Assyrians*, till at last they were carried out of their owne Land.

Gnattah, *propediem brevi*, *opportunè q. d. propter peccata nunc imminet nunc.*

V. Schools Guard, Rule 18.

4 Here is an *Exegesis*, or further illustration of their misery, *and the banquet of them that stretch themselves shall be removed.* The Prophet alludes to those before, *vers.* 4. *b.* who wantonly stretch themselves upon their beds of Ivory, q. d.

Those luxurious, lazie wantons, that gave themselves up to feasting and banquetting, to ryot and lasciviousness, shall have their mirth turned into mourning, and their Organs into the voyce of them that weep.

Their Banquet shall be removed. It is a Meiosis, *i. e.* all their jollity, pride, and pleasure shall be taken from them, and instead thereof destruction and misery shall pursue them; so that they shall have neither minde, nor Money to make Feasts, who were wont to spend all upon their backs and bellies.

The words are rendred by some, thus, *And the sorrow of them that stretchest themselves is at hand.* This comes from the various rendring of two words in the Original; the first is the word *Mirzach*, which the Vulgar render *Fuction*, but without any ground at all; others, *Sorrow*; but the word properly signifies a Funeral-feast, for in those dayes they had feasts at Burials, as well as at Bridals, *Jer.* 16. 7. The word is used but in one place more in all the Scripture, and that is, *Jerem.* 16. 5. *Enter not into the house of mourning*; or as the Margin renders it, goe not to the Mourning-feasts, or Banquets which were wont to be kept with abundance of riot, pomp, and jollity. These Funeral-Feasts were first ordained for the comforting of such as grieved for the loss of their friends by death, but these here abused them to wantonness, and excess.

Mirzach, est convivium funebre in exequiis mortuorum, ad consolandum propinquos mortui parari solitum, ut Rup. V. Leigh. cris. sac. Hieron. Ranzch. p. [illegible] folio.

Sur, accedere, recedere, removere.

The other word which causeth this diversity, is the word *Sur*, which signifies to approach, or to depart, it is here taken in the latter sense, according to our Translation; *The banquet of them that stretche themselves shall be removed*, q. d. all your mirth and merriment shall cease, and yee shall be carried Captive into a strange Land.

5. Here is the ground of all their sorrow, and suffering, included in the Illative Particle, *Therefore*, therefore shall they goe Captive with the first, *viz.* for their security, oppression, luxury, and inhumanity.

The words being thus cleared, the Observations follow.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Security, Luxury, and Inhumanity, doe bring a People into Captivity and misery.*

These

These sins ruined the *Old World*, *Sodome* and *Jerusalem*, Ezek. 16. 49, 50. and 22. 3, to 15. Luk. 17. 26, 27. And if they be found reigning in *England*, they will ruine it too. If we abuse our good Land in dishonouring God, hee will cast us out of it into captivity.

2 *Those that are Leaders in sin, many times are Leaders in suffering.*

When such as excel others in gifts, and dignity do go before them in iniquity, 'tis just they should lead them the way into captivity. God is no respecter of persons, be they Princes or Peasants, Soveraigns or Servants that sin against him, they shall not escape; if Kings offend, they have a King above them that will not spare them. *Psal.* 68. 14. and 76. 12. and 110. 5. *Isa.* 30. 33. Hence the Apostle would have Masters to know, that if they wrong their servants, yet they have a Master in Heaven that will right them, *Ephes.* 6, 9. Great men that abuse great blessings, shall have great punishment. Many Great men think, that their greatness should priviledge them in their wickedness; when 'tis an aggravation of their sin, and hastens judgement, 2 *Sam.* 12. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. And therefore we many times finde the poor spared, when the richer sort are plundred and slain, 2 *King.* 24. 12, 13. and 25. 20, 21, 22. *Jer.* 39. 10. when those that should bee patterns of Piety, become Patrons of impiety, prophaneness, and luxury, going before them in sin, it is just with God that they should be punisht before others; as we see in *Saul*, *Ahab*, *Zedekiah*, and many Heathen Emperours, whom Justice cut off for their luxury and cruelty.

Ingentia beneficia, ingentia vitia, ingentia supplicia.

3. *God turns the mirth of wicked men into mourning.*

Their feasting into fasting, and their banquets into funeral-feasts, where there is, or at least-wise ought to be, weeping and mourning.

Many men drive away sorrow and trouble of mind, and cannot endure the thoughts of mourning; but though they fly sorrow, yet sorrow will not fly them, but will suddenly surprize them, and damp their pleasures, *Dan.* 5. 45. *Luk.* 12. 20. It will be our wisdome therefore *Actively*, and freely to afflict our selves, to weep and mourn for our sins, *James* 4. 8, 9. Else we shall be humbled *Passively*, against our wills, and God will bring some plague upon us, till he have either bend-

ed or broken us. We should therefore fear to displease him in whose hands are all our times, *Dan.* 5. 23. Both of mirth and mourning, of rising and ruining, of plenty and poverty, of honour and dishonour, of advancement and abasement, of health and sickness, of living and dying; *All our times are in Gods hand*, Psal. 31. 15. And tis well for us they are so, for if they were in other hands we were undone. Wee see *Jobs* times were but a little space in the Devils hands, and how sad was it with him. He that sate to day like a King, how suddenly is he on the Dunghil? His Cattel are taken from him, his Children slain, his Body full of boyls, and his Soul full of terrours. And thus it would be with us all, and worse, if we lay at the mercy of Sathan, who rageth more now than ever, because his time is but short, *Revel.* 12. 12. 2 It would be sad with us, if our Times were in mens hands, whose mercies are cruelties, they would deal with us as *Pharaoh* did with *Israel*, or *Herod* with *John Baptist*.

See Doct. *Sibbs* Beams of Light on Acts 13. 36. p. 175, 176. &c

3 It would be ill with us, if our times were in our owne hands, it is ten thousand times better that they are in Gods hand. For, 1. Now they are in the hands of *a most wise God*, who knowes what is better for us than we doe for our selves. 2. They are in the hands *of a merciful God*, who turns all to good to his people, and hath promised to pitty and spare us, as a man spares his Son that serves him, *Psal.* 103. 13. all his wayes are mercy in making promises, and truth in keeping them, *Psal.* 25. 10. 3. They are in *Powerful hands*, hee is able to keep what we have committed to his trust, *Joh.* 10. 28, 29. 4. They are in *faithful and trusty hands*, friends may deceive us, *Micah* 7. 5. but he is truth it self, he cannot deceive, nor be deceived.

2 It may comfort us in afflictive times, that all our afflictions are in Gods hand, for matter, manner, time, and measure, *Revel.* 2. 10. he shall cast *some* of you, not all. 2. He shall cast you into *Prison*, not into the grave.

3 It is but for *ten dayes*, not ten years. God sets them their bounds, and sayes to these Metaphorical waves, as hee doth to the Natural, *Hitherto shall yee come and no further*. He measures out the dayes and nights, and moneths and years, that our trials shall continue, *Job* 7. 3. As we came into the world by Providence, so we goe out of the world by Providence,

dence, God hath set us our bounds which wee cannot pass, *Job* 7. 1. & 14. 5. neither men nor Devils can take away our lives from us till our work be done, *Joh.* 7. 30. wee should therefore be couragious in duty, and run hazards for God, in whose hand is our life, and not be afraid of man who must dye, *Isa.* 51. 12. we have our day and to morrow to work, and till we have finisht our course none can hurt us, *Luk.* 13. 32. to God the Lord belong the issues from death, *Psal.* 68. 20. we should therefore submit our wills to Gods will, bee willing to live so long as he would have us live, and to dye when he shall call for us.

3 We should bless God, who hath brought us forth, into the best times that ever the Nation saw, our Lot is fallen in pleasant seasons; they are happy times in respect of means, though we have made them unhappy for want of hearts to improve them. We should not therefore quarrel at the Providences, and various dispensations of the times, but rather admire and adore the wisdome and goodness of God in them, so did *Daniel*, ch. 2. 20, 21.

4 We should improve the time which we have from God, unto his praise. Who plants a Vineyard and doth not eat the fruit of it? Our time is Gods, and therefore great reason we should spend it to his praise, *Acts* 13. 36. It was the great commendation of the men of *Issachar*, that they understood the times, and knew what *Israel* ought to doe in them, 1 *Chro.* 12. 32. It is the greatest wisdome in the world, to observe the opportunities and seasons of grace, *Ephes.* 5. 15, 16. Hence our Saviour chargeth it as a great sin upon *Jezabel*, in that hee gave her space to repent, but she repented not, *Revel.* 2. 20. most live as if time were at their owne dispose, they are very liberal of anothers right, promising themselves many dayes and years, when they have not assurance of one day, *Isa.* 56. 12. *Luke* 12. 20. As we cannot adde one cubit to our stature, so we cannot adde a day to our daies. How sad then is the condition of wicked men, who daily dishonour that God in whose hand is their life? Consider, your times are in the hands of that God to whom you are profest enemies, and with whom he is angry every day, *Psal.* 7. 12, 13. though he bear long, yet he will not alwayes bear, for their feet shall slide in due time, *Deut.* 32. 35.

Verse 8.

The Lord God hath sworn by himself, saith the Lord of Hosts, I abhor the excellency of Jacob, *and hate his Palaces, therefore will I deliver up the City, with all that is therein.*

IN this Verse we have a *Prolepsis*, or preventing of a Plea which *Israel* might make for themselves, saying, Wee are the people of God, in Covenant with him, and have received Circumcision, the seal of the Covenant, and at this day we doe enjoy many glorious priviledges, and signal favours from him, and therefore it is not like that he will destroy us, whom he hath loved so long, and made the head of the Tribes, and the glory of the world. To this the Prophet answers, Deceive not your selves with any vain confidence in your pomp, and priviledges, as if your glory and excellency could secure you from divine Justice; for I must tell you from the Lord, that since you have abused his blessings, hee abhors your Excellency, hates your Palaces, and will destroy your Cities wherein you trust, *vers.* 1. and the better to assure you of the truth of all this, he hath sworn it, *The Lord hath sworn, that he abhors the excellency of* Jacob.

In this Verse we have, 1. A Commination, *I will deliver up the City, with all that is therein*; q. d. you glory in your two fortified Cities, viz. *Samaria* and *Jerusalem*, you trust in the riches, strength, and fulness of them, but though they be never so full of men, money, and all manner of store; yet for your sins I will deliver them, and all their riches, with all the inhabitants into the hands of the *Assyrians*, and *Chaldeans* for a prey. Though in their owne conceit they seem invincible, by reason of the multitude of men and ammunition, yet I will empty them, and will send an enemy to besiege them, into whose hands I will deliver them.

Quæ implent eam, i. e. *plenitudinem ejus. Heb.*

Sagar, clausit, occlusit, conclusit, coercuit, ut nullum esset effugium Gnir, civitas, i. e *civitates. Ezr. numeri, & Met. Sub.*

By City here is meant, the Citizens and their substance, all should become a prey to the merciless enemy, both in *Samaria* and *Jerusalem*, for by a Synechdoche both are here threatned; both had sinned, and therefore now both shall suffer; *Samaria* shall be sackt by the *Assyrians*, and *Jerusalem* by the *Chaldeans*. It is true, that in this Chapter, and in the whole

whole Prophecy, the Prophet speaks primarily, and principally to the ten Tribes; but secondarily, and concomitantly to *Jerusalem*, and the other two Tribes, as I have shewed, vers. 1.

2 Here is the ground of this destruction, and that is, Gods detestation of them for their sins, *I abhor the excellency of Jacob*, and therefore I will deliver their Cities into the hands of their enemies. Some render the words thus, I abhor the *Pride of Jacob*, that is true, for as the Lord abhors Pride in all, so especially in his *Israel*, a people neer unto him. The word signifies both Pride and Excellency, but because this people confided in their Priviledges, and boasted of their Dignity, therefore the word is most properly rendred excellency. The word is sometimes taken in evil part, for pride, and arrogancy, *Exod.* 15. 7. and sometimes in good part, for magnificence and excellency, so here; for the Prophet in this Verse doth not enveigh against their pride, (he had done that before) but he labours to remove their carnal confidence which they placed, 1. In *the Temple*, which is called in Scripture by the name of Excellency and Glory, because it was that wherein they gloried, *Psal.* 47. 4. *Ezek.* 24. 21.

Gaon, excellentia, gloria, superbia Jacobi, i. e. Israelitarum. Mer. esse.

Gloriosum Dei Templum hic gloria Jacobi nominatur. Rivet.

2 In their Riches, Dignities, Priviledges, and Prerogatives, wherewith that Nation was adorned above all the people of the world, *Rom.* 3. 1, 2. & 9. 4, 5. they thought that the bare having of these would sheltor them from punishment, but the Lord tells them; that he abhorred both them and their priviledges, and since they had abused them, and so forfeited them all, they were now so much the more hatefull and abominable to God; q. d. *You look upon your selves as the only high and holy ones of the World, but I tell you (saith God) since you abuse my blessings to my dishonour, I look upon you as a pack of prophane, ungodly men, and will deal with you accordingly; and therefore tell not me of your Temple, Sacrifices, dignity, and riches, for I tell you to your faces, that I detest both you and your excellencies, and abhor your stately Palaces, which you have built by oppression and cruelty, and have abused to my dishonour.*

Armenoth, i. e. Palatia, & arces basilicae. Taab, desideravit, & per Antiphrasin abominatus fuit; in Caal est desiderare, in Piel contrarium significat, ut aversari, abhorrere; sic plerique verba Hebraea in diversis conjugationibus contrarias habent significationes. Mercer.

3 Here

3 Here is the confirmation of this Commination, *The Lord hath sworn it*, even the Lord of Hosts, who is Omnipotent, and hath all power in his hand to execute his purposes. The Lord doth not only say it, but swear it; the *Jewes* were hard of belief, and sleighted the threatnings of the Prophets, therefore the Lord confirms it with an Oath, saying, *I have sworn by my self*, or as the words are in the fountain, I have sworn (*Benaphsho, in anima sua*) by my Soul, or Life, the Lord swears by himself, because there is none greater than he. The soul is the man, and he that swears by his soul swears by himself, and therefore the soul (according to the Hebrew Idiom) is oft put for a mans self, as *Psal.* 3. 2. *Jer.* 51. 6. *Matth.* 25. 26. It is an Anthropopathy frequent in Scripture, *Gen.* 22. 16. *Jer.* 51. 14. it is spoken of God after the manner of men, as an Hand, an Eye, a Face, a Foot. is oft ascribed to God; so here and elsewhere, a Soul is ascribed to God, *Isa.* 1. 14. *Jer.* 5. 9, 29. which is God himself, for whatsoever is in God, is God.

Per animam vita Dei intelligitur, i.e. *ipsamet Dei essentia, seu ipse Deus. Polanus Syntag. l.* 2. *c.* 35.

Q. d. *If we beleeve men who swear by their soul, or life, (which yet is as nothing) how weighty ought my Oathes to bee with you (saith the Lord) when I put my self to pledge; and if yee will not beleeve my Prophets, yet beleeve me, whose Decrees are immutable, whose Judgements are intolerable, who cannot deceive, nor be deceived; who am Omnipotent, and able to put all my Threatnings in execution against you, since I am the Lord of Hosts, whom all Creatures doe obey as their Supreame Commander.*

Juravit i.e. *immutabiliter decrevit.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Swearing in it self is lawful.*

God himself who cannot sin, yet swears by himself, *Isa* 45. 23. & 62. 8. *Heb.* 6. 13. The Lord to strengthen our faith in the truth of his *Promises*, sometimes swears, *Gen.* 22. 16. *Psal.* 132. 11. *Heb.* 6. 17. and sometimes he confirmes the truth of his Threatnings with an Oath, to make us fear, *Psal.* 95. 11. *Heb.* 3. 11. thrice happy they for whose sake the Lord swears, and most unhappy they that beleeve him not when he swears; since he that beleeves not God makes him a Lyar, 1 *Joh.* 5. 10. not by any transmutation of God, but

See my Com. on 2 Tim. 4. 1. p. 305.

but because hee esteemes his Word and Promises as a false thing.

2 *Wicked men are hardly brought to beleeve the Threatnings of God.*

The Lord must swear here to awaken them out of their stupidity, so sottish are men by nature, especially when hardned in a way of sin; and if Gods owne people in whom there is a Principle of Grace, be slow of heart to beleeve the Doctrin of the Gospel, *Luke* 24. 25, 26. how hard is it to work those truths upon those who have neither eyes to see, nor ears to hear, 1 *Cor.* 2. 9.

See Dr. *Boltun* in his Serm. in folio on Joh. 1. 50. p. 190.

3 *God is the Lord of Hosts.*

He hath all Power in his hands, and all Creatures at his command, ready to execute his wrath upon wicked men. This Title is given to God above two hundred times in the Old Testament, and but once in the New, *Jam.* 5. 4. the reason is, because this is a name of Majesty and Terror, suitable to Old Testament times; but in the New Testament he hath more sweet and mild Titles, as Father of Mercies, God of all consolation, the Saviour of all men, &c. We should therefore fear to displease him, who hath the higher Host of Heaven, Myriads of Angels, and the lower Host of Creatures on earth, all ready at the least beck of their Lord and Master to destroy his enemies.

See more in my Comment. on Amos 4. 13.

V. Mendoza in 1 *Reg.* 1. 3. *Annot.* 5. *p.* 134.

4 *No Priviledges can preserve a sinful people from ruine.*

Let them be exalted to Heaven in excellency and glory, and beloaded with riches, nobility, dignity, and preheminence, yet if they abuse those Priviledges they shall be thrown down to Hell, *Matth.* 11. 23. God is no respecter of Persons, but in every Nation such as work righteousness are accepted of him, and such as work unrighteousness, be they *Jewes* or *Gentiles*, are rejected of him. When God shall chuse a people to be an holy people to himself, and they shall walk unholily, and live like the prophane of the world, it is just with God that they should perish with them. Many boast that they are Christians, they are Baptized, they hear the Word, and receive the Sacrament, Aye, but do you walk up to those Priviledges, and answer them with obedience; if not, you are but baptized Heathens; yea a drunken *Turk* is nearer Heaven than a drunken and dissolute Christian. Meer Titular

See more in my Com. on Hos. 13. 15. Obs. 4. p. 50.

Christians, are no Christians. As he is not a Jew that is one outwardly, so he is not a Christian that is one only nominally; we must be internal ones in spirit and in truth, answering our Gospel-Priviledges with Gospel-Practises, and then we shall be happy, *Rom.* 2. 25, 28, 29.

5 *Sin makes God to hate our very dwellings and Palaces.*

He loathes the habitations of wicked men, and looks upon them as so many Swine-styes, and sinks of sin. The habitations of the wicked are cursed of God, *Job* 12. 6. & 15. 34. *Zach.* 5. 4. As we should keep our bodies pure, as becomes the Temples of the Holy Ghost, so wee should keep our Houses pure from sin, and put away iniquity farre from our Tabernacles, that they may be *Bethels*, houses of God, and not *Beth-avens*, houses of vanity and iniquity, *Job* 11. 14. & 22. 23. this is the way to keep our houses in peace, *Job* 5. 24. *Prov.* 1. *ult.* & 8. 6. and to make our Families flourish, *Prov.* 14. 11.

We should rather desire with those holy Patriarcks, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, to live in Tents, and mean houses, where we may serve God (remembring that we are but Strangers and Pilgrims here, but Citizens of Heaven) than to live (as these Epicures in the Text) in stately Palaces, abounding with sensual luxury, and all manner of riot, till they be destroyed.

6 *When men will not beleeve the Threatnings, they shall feel the punishment.*

The righteous doe hear and fear, but the wicked never fear, till they feel the Sword and Pestilence upon them. When no warnings can mend a People, then Judgements end them; as we see in the old World, *Jerusalem*, and others; *Lots* Sons in Law would not beleeve till they were burnt, *Gen.* 19. 14. nor *Pharaoh* till he was drowned.

7 *It is Sin that ruines Cities.*

See my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. Obs. 6. and M. *Craig* his 8th. Ser. p. 132.

Israel sinned, and now City and all is taken. It is this, that hath brought fire and sword, desolation and destruction upon the most glorious Cities. Many complaine of Instruments that have betrayed them, but it is our sins that have betrayed us into their hands; and therefore Magistrates, Ministers, and Governours should improve their interest for the stopping of sin, that so they may prevent the ruine of those places where they dwell.

VER.

VERSE 9.

And it shall come to pass, if there remaine ten men in one house, that they shall dye.

WEE have heard of *Israels* Captivity before, but since that could doe no good, now comes the Pestilence; and that no ordinary one, which usually leaves some untouch't; But such a terrible, destructive Pestilence, that should sweep away all before it; insomuch that if ten men remaine alive, they shall all dye, and they shall be buried not in an ordinary way, but they shall be burnt, and that by the nearest relations, which was used by the people of *Israel*, only in cases of extream necessity, 1 *Sam.* 31. 12.

In this Verse we have, 1 A *Judgement threatned*, viz. death, *Yee shall dye*, i. e. by the Pestilence. Those that escaped the Sword, and were not killed, or carried away by the enemy, the Pestilence, or some other Judgement shall slay them, as appears by the next verse.

2 Here is *the fiercenesse of this Pestilence*, it shall sweep all before it, this is more than the Pestilence usually doth; God had corrected them before with lighter rods, yet he left some alive; but now if ten men remaine in some very numerous Family, they shall all dye together. This sets forth the dreadfulnes of Gods wrath against this people, for when the Plague rageth very fiercely, yet it usually spares some, if there bee four or five in an house, usually one is spared, or if eight in a Family, it may be two are spared; but when there are ten in a Family, and they must all dye, this is dreadful indeed. By *Ten* the Prophet signifies *many*, because ten is the utmost of single number; It is a certain and distinct number put for an uncertain, the like we find, *Numb.* 14. 22. *Levit.* 26. 26. 1 *Sam.* 1. 8. *Job* 19. 3. *Psal.* 91. 7. *Eccles.* 7. 19. *Isa.* 5. 10. *Zach.* 8. 23. *Mat.* 25. 1.

See *Caryl* on Job 19. 3.

3 Here is the certainty of this dreadful destruction, *It shall come to pass*; that is, it shall certainly come to pass, for God hath so decreed it, and there is no resisting.

Hajah, erit, fiet. Ehjeh, the name of God, which denotes his immutability, comes from hence.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Judgements seldome goe alone.*

See more on *Amos* 4.8. Obs. 2.

When God begins to correct a people he takes them up for all together, and spends one rod upon them after another, till he hath either mended or ended them. God wants not variety of wayes to cut off rebellious sinners, if they escape one Judgement, yet he hath another to arrest them, *Amos* 5. 19. & 9. 1, 2, 3. *Mat.* 24. 7. he hath moths, thieves, rust, and cankers to rob us of our comforts, *Jam.* 5. 2, 3.

2 *Desperate Diseases must have desperate Cures.*

See my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. p. 68.

When gentler corrections will not work on a people, then come direful plagues and end them. Those sinners were become desperate and incurable, and now the Lord sets upon them with direful judgements and consumes them; that so all the Nations round about might hear and fear, and doe no more so wickedly.

3 *Incorrigible sinners are cut off by the Pestilence.*

God had used all means to reclaime this People, but all in vaine, therefore now they must dye for it. So true is that of the Apostle, The wages of sin is death, *Rom* 1. 31. & 6. 23. Sin and Death came into the world together, *Gen.* 2. 17. *Dan.* 9. 11. *Rom.* 5. 12. How blind then are the *Socinians*, that can finde no place in Scripture where it is said, that death is the punishment of sin.

4 *What God hath decreed shall certainly be effected.*

Though we cannot bring it to pass, yet he can and will, whether it be for the overthrow of the wicked, as here; or for the comfort of the godly. The counsel of the Lord shall stand, and the thoughts of his heart unto all generations. Men may plot, and contrive wayes to overthrow the Doctrine and Discipline of Christ, but these devices and counsels of men shall not stand, it is the counsels of the Lord only that shall abide, *Psal.* 33. 10, 11.

VER. 10.

And a mans Uncle shall take him up, and he that burneth him, to bring out the bones out of the house, and shall say unto him that is by the sides of the house, Is there yet any with thee? and he shall say, No; then shall he say, Hold thy tongue, for we may not make mention of the name of the Lord.

VVHat the Prophet had exprest somewhat obscurely in the precedent Verse, he sets down more fully and clearly in this, viz. That the Pestilence should be so dreadful, that it should destroy whole Families, insomuch that there should not be living men enough to bury the dead. There should neither be Father nor Mother, Brother nor Sister, Son nor Daughter left alive to doe the last office of Burial for them; but a mans Uncle, or Kinsman must doe it for him, else hee may lye and rot above ground.

Dod, amator, amicus, propinquus, Patruus, significat generatim quemvis amicum dilectum, & per Synec. Spe. Patruum.

This shews what great desolation the Pestilence had made amongst them, that the Uncle, or nearest Kinsman (to whom the right of succession to the Inheritance belongs) must bee constrained to burn the Body, that so he might carry the bones out of the house with more ease. This was servile work, and belonged to mercenary men appointed for that purpose, *Ezek.* 39. 14. but for want of such ordinary Officers to doe it, the Kinsman must doe it.

So that in this Verse we have, 1. An Amplification of that great desolation which the Pestilence should make amongst them, it should be so terrible that it should destroy whole Families, and cut off those ordinary Officers which were appointed to bury the dead, insomuch that the next Kinsman must be forced to doe it; neither shall he doe it in an ordinary way, but he must burne his bones. *Calvin* and others make the Uncle alone to be both the burner of the dead, and the burier of his bones; they read the words thus, *His Uncle shall take him up and burne him, that he may carry the bones out of the house.* This reading seems to be most genuine and agreeable to the Text and context, setting forth the dreadful hand of

Vmesarepho, & comburens eum i. e. & comburet eum ad tollendum ossa e domo. Calvin.

God upon them, in that the Pestilence should be so fierce, that they should want ordinary Officers to bury the dead.

Q. *But how are they said to burne their dead, when it appears both by the Old and New Testament that the* Jewes *did bury their dead?* Gen. 23. 4. & 49. 31. & 50. 5, 25, 26. Mat. 8. 21, 22. Joh. 19. 41, 42.

A. It is true, usually they did bury their dead in times of Peace, but in times of Warre they sometimes did burn their dead, as they did *Saul*, and his Sons, to prevent further abuse which might be offered to their bodies by the Philistims, 1 *Sam.* 31. 12, 13. so in times of great contagion to prevent stench, and further infection, they burnt their dead, as in the text; They might also burne them to cleanse the house (which was fallen to the Kinsman) from legal uncleanness by the dead, *Numb.* 19. 14. Hence we read of their *Vespillones*, and *Pollinctores*, their buriers and their burners of the dead, and so had the *Gentiles*, and the *Romans*, they burnt their dead to ashes, and put their ashes into Urns (as appears by * *Virgil*, *Ovid*, and others) and Pitchers of Gold, Silver, Brass, or Marble, with great care and ceremoniousness. These *Jewes* being themselves Idolaters, did symbolize too much with Heathens and Idolaters in this thing.

Vespillo curabat cadavera, & more gentis comburebat.

* *Ossaq; lectis cado texit Corineus aheno, Vir. Aneid. 6.*

V. Godwins Roman Antiq. l. 2. cap. 21. S. 3. p. 76. and Jewish Antiq. l. 6. c. 5.

2 Here is the reason why they burne the dead, and that is, that they might the easier carry the bones out of the house, when the flesh was burnt off before.

3 Here is a Conference between the Kinsman and him that lies in the house, and *he shall say unto him that is by the sides of the house*; that is, to him that is within the house, as *Jonah* was said to descend into the sides of the Ship, *Jonah* 1. 5. so these for fear did run into some corner of the house, to hide themselves from the infection.

The Question which he asks is this, *Is there any yet with thee?* *viz.* left alive in the family, or dead, that I may burne them, and bury their bones.

2 Here is the Parties answer in the Negative, No, there is an end of all, there is not * one left, they are all dead and gone, according to that, verse nine, *If ten men be in one house, they shall all dye.*

* *Ephes, non nihil, nemo, fixis, consumptio; ab Apas, desiit, defecit.*

The Prophet inlargeth himself in this discourse, about Gods Judgements, the better to awaken these fottish, sensual, secure sinners.

3 Here

3 Here is the inference upon this answer, then shall he say, *Hold thy tongue*, be silent, be patient, doe not fret, nor fume, doe not mutter nor murmure against God, as if he had wronged you, because he kills you; but acquiesce in his just Judgements, and silently submit unto his will, for it is his work, *Amos* 5. 13. As for us, our sins are so great, and grievous, that we dare not once call on the Name of the Lord, for a release, or mitigation of his Judgements.

4 Here is the reason why they must keep silence, *viz.* Because the Lord was just in all that hee did unto them, and therefore they might not once make mention of the Name of the Lord by way of complaint, thus some. Interpreters sweat, and are much perplext with the various Versions of this Text, insomuch that there are almost as many Interpretations of it as there be Interpreters.

1 Say some, It seems to point at these two, who agree to be silent in what they had done, lest they should bee sequestred as uncleane by the Law, being legally polluted by touching the dead, *Numb.* 19. 14.

See more to this Point, in Hutchinson on the place.

2 Others give this gloss, *Hold thy tongue, for we may not make mention of the name of the Lord*, *q. d.* Be silent, lament not for them: for they are not worthy lamentation, they are so wicked, that they will not once remember God: nor cry to him, though he bind them with the cords of affliction.

Tace, quia non erant commemoraturi nomen Jehovæ. Piscat.

3 Others make it the voyce of desperate persons (according to the Margin of our Bibles) *We have not, or we will not make mention of the name of the Lord*, *q. d.* it is bootless to pray, for God is set to plague us, and will not be pacified; let us therefore eat and drink, since to morrow we must dye. Never tell us of Gods name, for he is our enemy, and we cannot endure to hear of him, for neither he nor his Ministers doe ever Prophesie good unto us. If we should call upon him we may mind him of us, and so bring new plagues upon our selves. This agrees best with verse eleven, which follows immediately.

Desperatam illorum malitiam notat, qui nec intermedias calamitates Dei manum agnituri, & illius opem imploraturi sint. Gualter in locum.

4 Others thus; These Hypocritical ones, that formerly gloried that they were Gods people, his peculiar, his inheritance, his holy ones, &c. Gods wrath shall lye so heavy upon them, that they shall boast no more of this, for they shall bee dumbe when they hear Gods name, and abhor it as desperate

rate reprobates use to doe. He will not suffer them any longer to take his name in vaine, his wrath shall burne so fiercely against them, that they shall not dare once to make mention of his name, or to come neer him who is a consuming fire.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Decent burial is a mercy.*

It is reckoned as a Judgement here, that these wicked men should want the honour and solemnity of ordinary burial. It is a mercy to have a Grave, and therefore when the Kings of *Judah* are recorded, their burials are also mentioned; and those of highest merit were buried in the upper part of the Sepulchers of the Sons of *David*, 2 Chron. 32. 33. *Asa* a good King was honourably buried, with great solemnity, 2 *Chron.* 16. 14. and so was King *Zedekiah*, Jer. 24. 5. But so was not wicked *Jeboram*, 2 Chron. 21. 19. and it was a curse upon *Jehojakim*, that he should be buried with the burial of an Asse, and be contemptibly cast into a ditch, *Jer.* 22. 18, 19. It is reckoned as a Judgement, when men have no burial, *Psal.* 79. 3. *Deut.* 28. 26. 1 *King.* 21. 23, 24. *Jer.* 14. 16. & 16. 4. and therefore *David* commends the burial of *Saul*, he blesseth and rewardeth the men of *Jabesh* for it, 2 *Sam.* 2. 5.

The Body is a peice of Gods Workmanship, curiously wrought, *Job* 10. 8. & 33. 4. *Psal.* 139. 5. and therefore must not be carelessly thrown away, it was redeemed with the precious bloud of Christ, and is the Temple of the Holy Ghost, 1 *Cor.* 3. 16, 17. & 6 15, 29. and shall be raised up at the last day, and bee made like to Christs glorious Body, *Job* 19. 25. *Phil.* 3. 21.

It is one of the last offices that we can doe for our Relations, we should therefore decently commit their bodies to the grave, as to a bed of rest, *Isa.* 57. 2. there to remaine till the general Resurrection of us all. So they did by *Steven*, Act. 8. 2. and the Patriarchs, *Acts* 7. 15, 16.

Caution. Yet we must beware, 1. Of the fopperies of the *Papists*, who keep the bones of Saints (supposed Saints most of them) unburied, that they may worship them, kiss them, and offer to them. 1 Bones are a part of mens bodies, and ought

ought to be buried decently, as well as the body; *Eccl.* 13. 19. *Josh.* 24. 32. it is reckoned as a punishment to have the bones lye unburied, *Isa.* 14. 19. *Jer.* 8. 1.

2. There is no Precept nor President in all the Word of God, that commands such Worship; yea the Lord himself hid the body of *Moses*, that it might not be Idolised, *Jud.* 9.

3. Those Relicks have proved to be the bones of Asses, Stags, Theeves, and Murderers.

4. It is injurious to Christ and derogatory from his Merits; yea it is injurious to the Saints, who are kept from their graves, where they rest in peace till the Day of the Lord. Besides you may see the folly of Superstition, when they should be imitating the Graces of the Saints, they are gathering their bones and breeches, their caps and girdles, their hairs and habits. At *Rome*, who lists may see, *Martins* Boots, *St. George* his Sword, *S. Crispins* Cutting-knife, *Josephs* Breeches, *Maries* Smock, *Thomas* his Shooe, the Milk of *Mary*, the Swadling-clouts of Christ, and the Asses Head that he rode on. So that *Rome* is a Church where Relicks and Images are worshipped, God Almighty pictured, Vowes violated, Prophaneness countenanced, half Communions administred, Humane Traditions equalized with Scripture, and Ceremonies multiplied.

Asinorum & canum ossa pro Martyrum ossibus amplexi sunt. Calvin. Opusc. de Reliquiis. V. Perkins Problem, p. 523. Vol. 2. & *Mulins* Buckler of faith, Art. 28. P. 333. & *Sharpii Lect. com. de Eccles. triumph. Contra.* 3. P. 2. P. 34.

2 *Caut.* Yet our greatest care should be for our *Souls*, what will it avail us to have the body perfumed, spiced, and embalmed, when the Soul which is the noblest part shall rot, and perish? Look to your Souls, and then God will provide for your bodies; when the Mid-wives feared the Lord, he made them houses.

See my Com. on 2 Tim. 4. 6. P. 373.

3 *Caut.* Yet we should not be dismayed, when the bodies of Gods Saints be given to the Beasts of the Field, and the Fowls of Heaven, *Psal.* 79. 2, 3. faith fears not such things. He that numbers the hairs of our heads, will not lose our bones; he that is so careful of our excrementitious parts, will not suffer our essencial and integral parts to perish. Solemn burial addes to the comfort of the living, but not of the dead. *Lazarus* had no Funeral solemnities, nor Marble Monument, yet was he carried into *Abrahams* bosome:

Vel ipsi Philosophi contempsere sepulturam. V. Aug. De Civit. Dei, l. 8. cap. 12.

----- Facilis jactura Sepulchri,
Cœlo tegitur qui non habet Urnam.

Lucan. l. 16.

2 Obs. *Gods people must be patiently silent in calamitous times.*

They must not be stupidly silent, for Grace doth not raze, but raise, and rectifie the affections. We may spread our distress before God, and in an humble manner expostulate with him; as *Job*, *Jeremy*, and other Saints have done. It is an holy silence, and not a sinful silence, which is here enjoyned us. When Gods hand lyes heavie upon us, not only our Tongues must be silent, *Levit.* 10. 2, 3. 1 *Sam.* 3. 18. *Isa.* 36. 6, 7, 8. *Amos* 5. 13. *Zeph.* 1. 7. but our Souls must keep silence to Jehovah, *Psal.* 62. 1. *My soul waiteth upon God*, so we read it, but others according to the Original, thus, My soul is silent, quiet, submiss, and subject to God, my affections are subdued to him. Many mens Tongues are silent, but their hearts are full of rage and fury; yea many mens words are smooth as oyl, when their hearts are like drawn swords. But a gracious soul in all humility adores the just Judgements of God upon himself, and others, without any murmuring or contradiction. He doth not impatiently fly in Gods face, nor charge God foolishly, *Job* 1. *ult.* but he peaceably resigns himself, and all he hath unto Gods dispose; God is the Potter, and he is the Clay, ready to be formed and framed, raised or ruined, made or marred, as he shall please. He gives the Lord a blank as it were, and bids him write what please himself, and it shall please him. Murmuring doth but double our strokes, it is a slandering of God, and a charging of him with folly, which he will not bear at our hands; and therefore when ever *Israel* fell to murmuring, a Judgement presently followed; other sins he can bear withall, but not with this. Untamed Heifers may gall their necks, but they cannot break the yoke. Wild Bulls in a Net, by tossing and tumbling do but intangle themselves the more, *Isa.* 51. 20. it is Prayer and Patience that will mend all; fret not then at Gods dispensations, neither quarrel with his Providences; but *judge your selves*, and justifie him, so shall you have peace, *Levit.* 26. 40. 41, 42. *Judg.* 10. 15. 2 *Chron.* 12. 6. *Ezra* 9. 13. *Neh.* 9. 33. *Psal.* 51. 4. & 119. 137. *Dan.* 9. 7. 1 *Cor.* 11. 31. Let us not like Sons of *Adam* justifie our selves, and lay the fault upon God, but let us kiss the hand that smites us, and say, *Righteous art thou Lord, and just are thy judgements.*

Animæ meæ dumjah, silens, tabita, quieta est.

See Mr. Burgess on Self-judging, on 1 Cor. 11. 31.

3 Obs.

3 Obs. *Hypocritical shews and shadows of Religion will stand a man in no stead in a day of wrath.*

These sensual Idolaters cried, The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord; they boasted that God was their Father, and they his people, that they knew him, and were known of him above all the people of the earth, *Hos.* 8. 2. But now the day of wrath is come, they dare not once make mention of the name of God, they are so oppreſt with the guilt of their sins. It is not crying Lord, Lord, but doing Gods will sincerely, that will yeeld us comfort in calamitous times, *Matth.* 7. 21, 22. 2 *Cor.* 9. 12. A dead Beast can doe us no service, and dead Graces will stand us in no stead. Let us not then cheat our selves with shewes instead of substance, and with counters instead of gold; let us not be almost, but altogether Christians, not having a name only to live, but let us live indeed; that we may be *Nathaniels*, Israelites indeed, in whom there is no reigning guile, *Joh.* 1. 47.

4 *Wicked men in calamitous times are full of despondency and despair.*

Though in times of Peace they may boast how God loves them, yet when God awakens their Consciences by his Judgements, the very name of God is terrible to them, and they could wish he were not: Then either they hide themselves with *Adam*, or run from him as *Cain*, Gen. 4. 13. or hang themselves with *Judas*, or cry with those wicked ones, *Job* 21. 14. *Depart from us.* Or, they blaspheme because of their pain, and like Serpents fly in the face of him that toucheth them, *Rev.* 16. *ult.* and like Heathens, who in their calamities curse their gods, and beat them, as the Authors of all their misery; and at last they shall cry to the Rocks and Mountains to fall upon them and hide them, *Luke* 23. 30. *Rev.* 6. 16.

These cry, *There is no hope*, Jer. 18. 12. and therefore they banish the thoughts of God out of their hearts, *Psal.* 10. 4. and will not once make mention of him in their troubles. These are beaten, but not bettered; corrected, but not amended; and in some respect worse than Heathens, of whom *Seneca* observes, *That they were most busie in worshipping their gods, when they were most displeased.* But we have those that fly from God when he draws nigh to them, thoughts of God are never more pleasing

See Mr. *Burgess* his Spi. Refining, 1 Part, P. 469. Lect. 78

Diligentius Dii irati coluntur. Sen.

to a gracious soul, nor never more displeasing to wicked men than when they are in trouble.

VERSE III.

For behold the Lord commandeth, and he will smite the great house with breaches, and the little house with clefts.

IN this Verse we have an Amplification, and Confirmation of the precedent comination, *vers.* 8. The Prophet tells them, that the destruction shall be general, high and low, rich and poor, great and small, none should escape, but as all had sinned, so all should suffer; a forreign enemy like a violent flood should over-run the Land, so that there should be no escaping.

These Sinners were secure, and carnally-confident, trusting in their two victorious and successful Kings, *Jerobeam* the second King of *Israel*, and *Uzziah* King of *Judah*; they sleighted the words of the Prophet, and therefore the Lord resolves to preach to them in another manner *viz.* by the Sword of the *Assyrian*, and *Chaldean*, who should make them feel, what they would not beleeve.

In the words we have,

1 The causal Particle, *For*, which hath relation to the eighth and ninth Verses, where the Lord threatneth to destroy the City with its fulness, and to adde the Pestilence to the Sword, and gives you the reason of it in this verse, *Mandavit Dominus*, the Lord hath commanded and decreed it, and none shall be able to reverse it.

Metzavveh, mandavit, ordinavit, decrevit, & sicut decrevit, sic & exequetur.

2 Here is an ecce, *behold*, to incite both our Attention and Intention, it calls for our ears and eyes.

3 Here is the matter to be marked, and that is the command and charge of God to destroy his people for their provocations, *The Lord commandeth, and he will smite the City*, *q. d.* you have not to doe with an impotent man, but with an Omnipotent God, who as he hath made all things, so he hath them all at his beck, to help or hurt us as pleaseth him. Hee needs not Armies, he needs not Instruments to confound his adver-

adversaries, it is but speaking and it is done, *Psal.* 44. 4. & 148. 5.

Q. *How doth the Lord smite the City, when hee only commands that it should be done?*

A. It is a Rule, *Quod quis per alium facit, per se facere videtur.* In that the Lord commands the *Assyrians* and *Chaldeans* to destroy, *vers.* 14. he is said to doe it himself, because they were but his rods, and the instruments in his hand to chastise his people; whoever be the *Actor*, yet God is the *Author*.

4. Here is the Universality of this destruction, he will bring down great and small, he will cause the *Assyrians* and *Babylonians to smite the great house with breaches, and the little house with clefts.* The word which we render Breaches, signifies also droppings, which by little and little rot the house, and so make breaches and ruptures in it; but in this place it properly signifies ruptures, and breaches.

Refissis, rupturis, confractionibus, vel distillationibus, cant. 5. 2. *His verò idem valet quod Ratsim*, i. e. *fragmina.*

They were all incorrigible, and incurable, both great and small, and therefore now they shall be punisht, and perish together, both houses and inhabitants. Their Palaces and great Houses in *Sion*, and *Samaria*, should have a great down-fall; and the lesser houses should chop, and chink, and moulder away. By these expressions the Prophet intimates, that both noble and ignoble should perish together; as they had overthrown the Law, and all equity, *vers.* 12. so now God overthrows them.

Some conceive, that the Prophet here alludes to some Earth-quake, which should make breaches and clefts in their houses, but the Prophet confutes these, and tells us, that it shall be done by the hand of an enemy, *vers.* 14. Others Allegorize, and apply this to the two Kingdoms of *Israel* and *Judah*, which are called two houses, *Isa.* 8. 14. By the *great house* (say they) is meant the Ten Tribes, which did excell in wealth and dignity. By the *lesser house* is meant the Kingdome of *Judah*, which was little, compared with *Israel*; the Kingdom of *Israel* should be so ruined by the *Assyrians*, that it should never be repaired; but the Kingdom of *Judah* should only have some clefts and chawns made by the *Babylonians*, which were in part made up again, after the seventy years Captivity in *Babylon*, by *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*.

Perutiet regnum percussione forti, regnum vero minus plaga remissione. Chald. Para.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Matters of moment must especially be marked.*

Great Judgements were coming upon this People, and the Lord by an *Ecce*, *Behold*, labours to awaken them to the consideration of them. The birth of Christ is a matter of great moment, and therefore the Angels come with a *Behold*, Luk. 2. 10. the seasons of grace are matters of great moment, and therefore a double *Behold* is set upon them, 2 *Cor.* 6. 2. Our Original Sin is a matter deeply to be thought on, and therefore it hath an *Ecce* set upon it, *Psa.* 51. 5. and so on the Day of Judgement, *Jude* 7. *Revel.* 22. 7.

See more in *Robinson* on Ephes. 6. 13. Lect. 1. p. 3.

2 *Warre and Pestilence are Gods Servants, which come and goe at his beck and commandment.*

As all Creatures are his Servants, Winds, and Seas, and Sun obey him, *Job* 9. 7. so all Armies are his, he is Lord of Hosts, and if he but stamp or hiss for an Enemy, or call for a Pestilence on the Land, they readily obey, *Isa.* 7. 18, 19. *Levit.* 26. 25. *Jer.* 47. 6, 7. he can destroy the most potent enemy by the most impotent and contemptible means, as Froggs, Flies, Lice, *Psal.* 105. 31.

If he say to such and such Diseases, Go, seize on such a man, or such a woman, they go; if he bid them cease, they cease. We should not therefore bribe the Sergeant, but compound with the Creditor. Run not in your sickness and distress to Physick or Friends, but make peace with God in the first place, and then all shall be at peace with you.

We should also be *patient* under all Dispensations, looking at Gods hand in all, seeing him ordering and disposing all for the good of his. This will make your dumbe and silent, when you see it is the Lord that doth it, 2 *Sam.* 16. 10. *Psal.* 39. 9. *Joh.* 18. 11.

See my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. p. 209.

3 Obs. *Universality in sin brings universality in suffering.*

The generality of this people were corrupt, and now they are generally ruined. As rich and poor were Idolaters, Apostates, and Prophane; so now they should be ransackt and ruined together.

4 Obs. *Sin brings a curse on our dwellings, and layes famous fabricks in the dust*, as I have shewed before on verse eight.

VER.

Ver. 12.

Shall Horses run upon the Rock? Will one plow there with Oxen? for ye have turned judgement into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock.

IN the precedent Verse the Lord threatned a general Judgement against these general Sinners, but they trusting to their owne strength and glory, feared no Judgements, but conceited that the Lord who had taken them into Covenant with himself, and adopted them for his owne peculiar people, and adorned them with many Priviledges above the rest of the Nations round about them, would not deal so sharply with them as the Prophet threatned; but would take some gentler course, plowing them still by his Prophets, and labouring to reclaime them by their Ministery.

To this the Lord answers in this Verse, by a Prolepsis, he prevents this evasion and vain conceit, telling them, that it was to no purpose to take any more pains with them, or to correct them with gentler rods, for they remained still obstinate and perverse, falling away more and more, growing worse and worse; so that he did but plow the rocks, and so break his Plows without any increase; and sow the sands, losing his labour on them; and therefore he is now resolved, that his Spirit should no longer contend with such rockey, rebellious Sinners, nor his patience wait any more upon them. The Interrogation is a strong Negation: *Shall Horses run upon the rock, or Oxen plow there?* No, they will not, they are not fit places for such purposes; and doe you think that I will alwaies sing to deaf men, and bestow my cost and care upon such rockey and hardned Sinners, that will bring forth no fruit?

It is a Proverbial speech, and signifies lost labour, and therefore we use to say of such as labour in vaine, They goe about to plow the rocks, and sow the sands.

Sicut frustra laboraret, siquis vellet incitare equos ad cursum in Petra, aut siquis bobus eam vellet arare; sic ego frustra laboro, dum vos hortor ad faciendum recta, qui a plane perversi estis. Piscator.

Interpreters vary much in their Exposition of this first branch of the verse. See five various senses in *a Lapide*, and

six in our large Annotations; that which I have given (with submission to better judgements) I conceive to be most genuine, and best agreeing with the context; which is the surest and soundest way of expounding Scripture, and is of more weight than an hundred *sic dixits* of this and that man.

So that in this Verse we have, 1. The *Lord's resolution* to plow these rocks no longer.

2. Here is the Reason and ground of this Resolution, *viz.* for their *Injustice, Oppression, Tyranny*, and all kind of cruelty towards the poor. There was no righteousness to be found amongst them, they had turned Judgement into Gall, or *Poyson*, (as the word also signifies) because poyson is the bitterest part of poysonous beasts, to wit, the gall. The word also signifies the *Head*, and is put for Poyson; because the Poyson of Dragons lies in their head, *Deut.* 32. 33.

And righteousness into hemlock, or wormwood, so the word properly signifies, and it is so rendred in other places, as *Jer.* 9. 15. *Lam.* 3. 15. *Amos* 5. 7. They absolved the nocent, and condemned the innocent; they acquitted the wicked, and condemned the just; they favoured the rich, who could bribe well, and oppreſt the poor who had nothing to give, *Amos* 4. 1. so that their Courts of Justice were as sweet as Honey to the wicked, but as bateful and bitter as gall to the godly.

Justice in it self is a most sweet and pleasant thing; it is the very *asylum* and sanctuary of the poor, and the oppressed; but these luxurious ones had turned this soveraign Medicine into a deadly Poyson, and made that which is in it self sweet as honey, to become bitter as gall unto the oppressed, and as hemlock to the poor, which is a dangerous venemous weed, killing him that tasts of it.

Rosh, significat toxicum & tale venenum quod serpentes in capite gestant. Laganaah, absynthium, in gratissimi suavis herba; Metaphoriè res ingrata, molesta, noxia.

Fructum justitiæ vocat pacem publicam, quæ sub iniquis Magistratibus in absynthium degenerat. Guat.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *The patience of the Lord will not alwayes wait upon impenitent sinners.*

He will not alwayes plow the rocks, and sow the sands, nor take pains with such ground as brings forth nothing but Bryars and Thorns; such barren ground is nigh to cursing, *Heb.* 6. 8. *Isa.* 5. 1. to 8. The Lord had planted his Vineyard in an Horn of Oyl,

See my Com. on Hos. 13. 12. p. 425.

Oyl, *i. e.* in a very fruitful soyl, from whence he might justly expect the generous fruit of sincere obedience; he fenced it about with his gracious Protection and good Laws; he removed all impediments of growth and fruitfulness; but when he came to look for grapes of obedience, behold the wilde grapes of cruelty, injustice, and disobedience; he therefore resolves to take away the hedge, break down the wall, lay it wast, and expose it to the fury of every wild beast. Barren trees are good for nothing but fewel, *Matth.* 3. 10. *Mark* 11. 12. *Luke* 13. 6. to 10. When the Lord by his Word and Spirit hath long striven with men, labouring to bring them to Repentance, but they will not be wrought upon, but are like the Cypress tree, the more it is watered, the more it withers; the Lord at last resolves to make a final end with them, and utterly to destroy them, *Gen.* 6. 3. *Isa.* 1. 5.

See M. *Nathan. Rogers* on that Parable.

See Mr. *Love* on Gen. 6. 3. & Mr. *Fenner*, p. 377. folio.

2 *Proverbial speeches are commendable.*

The Lord himself useth them in Scripture. All Proverbs are commendable, especially sacred ones. They are short, witty, pithy, concise speeches, like Jewels that containe much worth in a little room. They prove themselves, and will have no nay, they save many words, and help the memory, a man cannot tell how well to forget them, or gain-say them. Hence *Solomon* abounded with them, and Christ a greater than *Solomon* occasionally used them; as, *No man can serve two Masters. A tree is known by his fruit. He that humbles himself shall be exalted. It is better to give than to receive, &c.* And it is observed, that the more learned any men are, the more pithy, sententious, and Proverbial they are; as we see in *Plato*, *Plutarch*, *Seneca*, *Aristotle*, *&c.*

V. B. *Babington* on Numb. 21. 26. p. 91. folio.

Inter bonos authores ut quisq; fuit eruditissimus, ita quamplurimum adagiorum suis libris asperſit. Quid divino illo Platone παροιμιῶδες ἔφερον? *Aristoteles suis disputationibus Paremias crebras seu gemmulas intertexuit, ὁι ῥήτορες τῶν ἀνθρώπων βραχυλογότατοι.*

3 Obs. *Perverting of Justice is a Land destroying sin.*

There is not a more infallible fore-runner of a Nations ruine, than when Courts of Justice are turned into Courts of injustice; and Courts of Equity become Courts of iniquity. This turning of Justice into Gall, brings gall and sorrow with it to a Land, *Jer.* 8. 14. & 9. 15. *Hos.* 10. 4, 5. it caused *Jerusalem's* day to draw neer, *Ezek.* 22. 6, 7. A corrupt Judge is a cold Fire, a dark Sun, a dry Sea. A false Teacher that poysons Souls, an unskilful Physician that destroyes Bodies, and a corrupt Judge that perverts Justice, are three great Evils; the one destroyes the fountain of *Piety*, the other de-

stroyes the fountains of *Sanity*, and the third destroyes the foundaine of *Civil Polity*. If a man bee oppreſt, hee flyes to Courts of Juſtice for refuge, and if they ſhall give him a draught of poyſon, or hemlock to kill him, this cryes aloud for juſtice againſt ſuch. *Iſa.* 5.7. *Jer.* 5.28,29. Execution of Juſtice is a moſt ſweet and pleaſant thing to God, no Hony ſo delightful to us, as this is to him. How great then is their ſin, who turn righteouſneſs into wrong, ſweet into ſower, and make poyſons of medicines? See what God ſaith to ſuch, *Amos* 4. 1.

Corruptio optimi eſt corruptiſſima. See my Com. on Pſal. 82. 2.

VERSE 13.

Yee which rejoyce in a thing of nought, which ſay, Have we not taken to us horns by our own ſtrength?

IN the firſt Verſe of this Chapter, the Prophet upbraids the *Iſraelites* with their carnal confidence; and in this Verſe he amplifies that exprobration; Yee are they (ſaith he) which rejoyce in things of nought, and glory in your own ſtrength, to your own confuſion, as it follows, *verſ.* 14.

In this verſe we have this Peoples ſin, *They rejoyce in a thing of nought.* And in the next verſe we have their puniſhment.

Q. *The Queſtion will be, what is meant by a thing of nought, or of no moment, here?*

A. By a thing of nought, 1. Some conceive an Idol is meant, which is called a thing of nought, or *nothing*, *an Idol is nothing*, 1. Cor. 4. 8. *materially* it may be wood or ſtone, but *formally* it is nothing. Though it may be ſomething in reſpect of mens vain conceits, yet is nothing in reſpect of any Divine power or vertue, for it can neither hurt nor help. Theſe people worſhipt the Calves, and worſhipt *Baal*, and other Idols, and ſo might be ſaid to rejoyce in things of nought. But,

2. Others conceive they rejoyced in Creature-comforts and Priviledges, ſuch as Riches, Honour, Power, Succeſs, the Covenants, Circumciſion, Adoption, &c. all theſe they boaſted and bragged of, as if they could have ſheltred them from Gods Wrath, but ſince they were rebellious and diſobedient, the Prophet tells them they ſhould doe them no good in the day of Gods Wrath, for they were but things of nought; and meer nothing compared with God; and in no wiſe to be reſted in.

Leiodabar, in non verba, verbum idem eſt quod res, in non verba, i. e. in non re, in nihilo, in re nullius momenti, i. e. in potentia ve-

3. And moſt genuinely, *To rejoyce in a thing of nought*, is to rejoyce in an arm of fleſh, to rejoyce in Armies, Strength, Victories

tories, and Successes; for so it follows in the latter part of the verse, which is exegetical, and illustrates the former, *Yee rejoyce in a thing of nought*. What's that? why yee say, *Have we not taken to us Horns by our owne strength?* It was their constant practise to rejoyce in a thing of nought, and to trust in their owne strength.

Hassemachim, Lætantes, vel qui lætantur, Participia hæc extensa sunt, ideoq; actus continuos denotant.

By *Horns* here is meant the power, dominion, glory, and excellency of a people. It is a Metaphor taken from horned Beasts, whose strength and beauty lyes in their horns. So *Deut.* 33. 17. 2 *Sam.* 2. 1. 10. *Job* 16. 15. *Psal.* 92. 10. & 112. 9. & 132. 17. & 148. 14.

Micah 7. 18. Joh. 1. 29. *V.* Schools-guard, Rule 56. *Scimus cornua Hebræis accipi pro excellentia, robore, altitudine, & quolibet præsidio. Calvin.*

Thus *they said*, viz. in their hearts, and thoughts at least, for what words are to us, that thoughts are to God, his Word and Spirit search the inward parts of the Soul, *Jer.* 17. 10. 1 *Cor.* 2. 10. they thought they had made themselves strong and impregnable by their own power. The Prophet seems to allude to the power and success which *Jerobeam* the second, one of the Kings of *Israel* had, in whose reign *Amos* Prophesied. This King was very successful and prosperous, he inlarged the borders of the Kingdom, and took divers Cities from the *Syrians*, 2 *King.* 14. 25, 27, 28. So *Judah* was very successful under King *Uzziah*, as appears, 2 *Chron.* 26. 1. to 17. these Victories and Successes made them proud, and lift up their horns, as if by their owne power and policy they had got the victory. Thus *they rejoyced in a thing of nought*, as if by their owne strength they had inlarged their borders, and could now defend themselves against forreign envasions.

The Interrogation is a strong Affirmation, *Have we not taken to our selves horns by our owne strength?* See what impious Arrogance, and Vain-glorious boasting here is, every word gives a crake, Have not *we* taken, Have not we taken *to us*, have not we taken to us *Horns*, yet more, Have not we taken to us Horns *by our owne strength?* They did all, God did nothing, he is not in any of their thoughts. I have read of Pope *Adrian*, who having built a stately Colledge at *Lovaine*, caused this to be written in golden letters over the gate, *Utrecht* planted him, there was he born; *Lovaine* watred him, there he got Learning; and *Cæsar* gave the increase, for he made him a Cardinal: one wittily comes after and subscribes, *Hic Deus nihil fecit, God had nothing to doe here*. So these men ascribed all to themselves, and

V. Schoolf-Guard, rule 30.

shut out God. Though the Lord by an Almighty hand had brought them out of *Ægypt* into the Land of *Canaan*, and drove out the *Canaanites* before them, and by a strong hand preserved them in that good Land; yet so proud, ungrateful, and dis-ingenious were they grown, that they sacrificed to their owne Net, and assumed all to themselves, saying, Have we not gotten these Victories by our owne strength? The Lord can now no longer bear with this Sacrilegious robbing him, of the honour which was due to his Name: and therefore in the next Verse he tells them, That he will raise up a Nation against them, that shall utterly destroy them.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *The Creatures excellency is all but vanity.*

Take the Quintessence of all the Riches, Power, Pomp, Beauty, Morality, and delights of the World, and put them in one scale, and put Vanity in the other, and they will prove lighter than vanity; and therefore they may well be called, *things of nought*. But of this at large elsewhere.

In my Com. on Psal. 73. 20. & *Lapide* in Amos 6. 13. & *Mendoza*, in 1 Reg. 2. Numb. 36. Annot. 25. p. 555.

2 Obs. *Such is mans corruption and madness, that he rejoyceth in things of nought.*

He dislikes what is truly good, and delights in vanity, *Psal.* 4. 6,7. Hence *Solomon* spends the whole Book of *Ecclesiastes* in dissuading men from this folly and madness. St. *Chrysostom* tells us, that if he had a voyce like Thunder, and a mighty Mountain for his Pulpit, and all the Men and Women in the World for his Auditory, he would chuse that Text to preach on, *Psal.* 4. 2. *O yee sons of men, how long will yee love vanity?*

3 *Gods Word is a critical word.*

V. Trapp True Treasure, ch. 3. Sect. 3. p. 86. & Glassii Philolog. lib. 1. Tr. 3. S. 3. *mihi*. p. 201.

It discovers the thoughts and intents of mens hearts, and layes their inside open, so great is its power and efficacy. Gods Word resembles God, as he is the only Heart-searching God, so his Word is the only Heart-searching Word. It pierceth to the very Marrow, and discovers to us our most secret thoughts and affections, *Heb.* 4. 12. and can tell us, whether we delight in things of nought.

4 *Wicked men ascribe that to their owne power and policy, which is due to Gods Power, and Grace.*

If they have success and victory, they presently lift up their Horns and push at God, that they may the better Sacrifice to their own Net, and burn incense to their drag. *Hab.* 1. 15, 16.

Thus

Thus *Senacherib* King of *Assyria* boasted of his power and success, as if he could conquer not only *Jerusalem*, but its God also, *Isa.* 36. Thus that Heathen that went forth to Battle, being admonished to call upon the Gods, answered, *that it was for cowards to pray*, as for himself, he was resolved to try his own strength in Battle, he did so, and was slaine. Let others kiss their own hands, *Job* 31. 27. and ascribe all to Idols and themselves; but let us, with all the Servants of God, ascribe the glory of all we are, or have, to God alone, for what have we that we have not received from him? 1 *King.* 8. 24. *Psal.* 20. 7. & 44. 5, 6, 7, 8. & 89. 9, 10, 17, 18. it is by the grace of God that we are what we are, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. See my Com. on 2 Tim. 4. 8. p. 410.

VER. 14.

But behold, I will raise up against you a Nation, O house of Israel, *saith the Lord the God of Hosts; and they shall afflict you from the entring in of Hemath, unto the river of the Wilderness.*

THese words contain the Conclusion of the fifth Sermon, which *Amos* made to this People. We have seen their Sin before, we are now come to their Suffering. This people gloried in things of nought, and would not beleeve the Prophets words, but now they should be taught by blows, and bee made to feel what they would not fear, and therefore the Prophet begins with a *but*, *But behold*, q. d. *you think by your own strength and power to subdue your enemies, but I will raise up against you the* Assyrian, *a mighty Nation, that shall chase you from one end of the Land to another.*

The Lord had told them before of Judgements in general that should come upon them for their sins, now he comes to particularize the Judgement; he tells them who shall inflict it, on whom, and how farre. They had forsaken God, and cast him off, and now he forsook them, they trusted to their own strength but God sends against them a stronger than they, that should subdue them. *But I will raise up against you a Nation, &c.*

In the words we have, 1. The Adversative Particle, *But*.

2 The Note of Attention, *Behold*.

3 The matter to be attended, *I will raise up against you a Nation*, viz. the *Assyrian* against *Israel*, and the *Babylonian* against *Judah*; for the bounds here set for the promised Land, do imply both Kingdoms, primarily *Israel* and *Samaria*, and secondarily, *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, as I have shewed on Vers. 1.

The Kingdom of *Israel* was overthrown by *Salmaneser* King of

Assyria, and the City and Temple of Jerusalem, by Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon; these God raised up to cool their courage, and abate their pride.

4. The Lord tells them what this Nation shall do to Israel, They shall afflict them, they shall press and oppress them by violence and Tyranny; they shall hem them in, and so straiten them, that none shall escape.

Lacheez, coarctavit, pressit, oppressit, afflixit, ut videre est, Judg. 4. 3. 1 Sam. 10. 18. Psal. 105. 42.

5. Here is the extent of this affliction, and how farre it shall go, and that is from Hemath, which was situate in the North border of Canaan, looking Eastward, vers. 2. Unto the river of the Wilderness; that is, to Sichor, a river of Ægypt in the South, looking Westward, and parting the Land of Israel from the Land of Ægypt, Numb. 34. 5, 8. Josh. 13. 3, 5. & 15. 47. 1 Chron. 13. 5. it is called the river of the Desart, because it came out of the Desart; some think it was the river Nilus, but the bounds of Canaan never extended so farre. Jeroboam had re-gained those bounds to Israel, they were proud of the Prize; but about thirty years after Tiglath-Pileser re-gained it all from Israel, and laid it to the Assyrians; and not long after comes Salmanesar the King of Assyria, and takes Samaria, and subdues the whole Kingdom of Israel. About one hundred years after, Judah was carried captive into Babylon, according to that woe denounced against them, ver. 1. When Warrs arise yet some use to escape, but here the Lord threatens, that they shall be oppreſt from one end of the Land to another. Though the Country were large and spacious, and there were many ways to escape, yet the enemy should beset them so strictly that there should be no escaping, but all should goe into Captivity. As all had sinned, so all should now suffer for sin. So that this verse seems to be a kind of Antithesis, and check to their Carnal confidence in their own strength and success, *q. d.* it is true, your King Jeroboam hath recovered your borders, but I will send one that shall recover all from you again. He restored all from Hemath to the Sea of the Plain; and I will send the Assyrian who shall wast Israel from Hemath to the Sea, *i. e.* from North to South, and from East to West; and then shall you see how infirm your firmness was; when your Valour shall be turned into weakness, your Glory into shame, and your Mirth into mourning.

6. Who is it that saith all this? why it is one that can and will perform it, *It is the Lord, the God of Hosts*; who hath the Army of the Assyrians, and all other Armies at his beck and command, vers. 8.

OB-

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Pride goes before destruction.* In the precedent verse we read of *Israels* Pride and Carnal confidence, and now see their fall. When pride is in the saddle, destruction is on the crupper, *Dan* 4. 30. we read of *Nebuchadnezzars* pride, and *ver.* 31. we read of his fall. Children that hold by their own coats pull themselves down; by his own strength shal no man prevail, 1 *Sam.* 2. 9. *Ezek.* 28. 9.

2. *The Lord is true in all his Threatnings.* Not one word shall fail of all that he hath spoken against a rebellious people. He threatned to send the *Assyrian* against *Israel* here, & he did it. He threatned to send the *Babylonian* against *Judah*, and they came at last.

3. *When people are rejoycing and most secure, then usually Judgements are neerest.* In the precedent verse they were rejoycing, and in this verse comes their ruine. When the old World was buying, selling, marrying, and merry-making, then came the Floud and swept them all away, *Mat.* 24. 38, 39. When Bells ring, Canons roar, Fires flame, and there is nothing but mirth and jollity, then may destruction be at the door. When men cry Peace, peace, then comes sudden and swift destruction, 1 *Thes.* 5. 3. 2 *Pet.* 3. 1.

4. *It is God who raiseth up enemies against a rebellious people. I will raise up a Nation against you.* War is one of Gods sore Judgments which he sends against a people of his wrath, *Ezek.* 14. 21. *Amos* 4. 10. when men will not serve God with gladness and sincerity in abundance, then he makes them serve their enemies in want and misery, *Deut.* 28. 47, 48. *Isa.* 42. 24, 25. The *Assyrian* is but Gods Rod, his Staff, his Axe, his Saw, to scourge, beat, hew, and divide; they are but Instruments, it is God that is the Agent.

See more on

5. *Universality in sin brings universality in suffering.* As the Land had been filled from corner to corner with uncleanenes, so now it should be answerably filled with punishment. National Sins bring National Plagues, *Ezra* 9. 10, 11. When *all* the old World was corrupt, then came the Floud and swept them all away. When all *Sodom*, and all *Jerusalem* were given to wickedness, then came Judgements and destroyed them. Multitudes in sin are so far from Patronizing the sinners, that it hastens wrath.

See my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. p. 109. *See an excellent Ser. of Mr. Bacon on Exod.* 23. 2. p. 14. at the end of his Exposition of Mr. *Perkins* Cathech.

6. *Sin brings a people into a desperate condition.* It brings them into such straits, that they know not which way to turn themselves. The Land of *Canaan* was spacious, and there were many ways of escaping, but their sins had brought things to that pass, that they were

surrounded

rounded with enemies, and there was none to deliver them.

7 *As Kingdoms have their times of flourishing, so they have their times of fading too.* *Israel* flourisht, and was successful under *Jeroboam*, but they fade and fall in the reign of King *Hoshea*. The *Grecian*, *Babylonian*, and *Persian* Monarchies which were sometimes famous through the world, are now mouldred away, and come to nothing, and so shall the *Roman*.

See *Greenhil* on Ezek. 26. 17. Obs. 3. p. 442.

8 *God usually retaliates Sinners, and pays them in their own coyn.* This people had for a long time pressed the Lord with their sins, *Amos* 2. 13. and now themselves are prest and oppreſt with Judgments. *Sodom*, and *Gomorah*, that burnt in lust, were burnt with fire. *Nadab*, and *Abihu*, that offered strange fire, perisht by strange fire from the Lord. *Asa*, that set the Prophet in the Stocks, had a disease in his feet. *Babylon*, that shed the bloud of Saints, hath bloud given her to drink. Hee that on earth denied a crumb of Bread, in Hell shal not have a drop of water, *Luk.* 16. 24, 25. They that delight in left-hand blessings, *Prov.* 3. 16. shal be placed with the Goats on the left hand, *Mat.* 25. 33. and those that delight in darkness, shal be sent to darkness, 2 *Pet.* 2. 17. They that say unto God, *Depart now*, he will say unto them, *Depart* at the last Day. He that will not owne Christs truth now, shall not be owned by him then. They that trample upon the Saints here, the Saints shall tread them under their feet hereafter, *Micha* 4. 11, 12, 13. & 7. 10. so that all the wicked at last shall be compelled to say with *Adonibezek*, Judg. 1. *As I have done, so hath the Lord rewarded me.* The *Egyptians* that worshipped creeping things, were punisht with Froggs, and other creeping things. *Demosthenes* and *Tully*, that were proud of their Eloquence, perisht by it. *Milo*, that gloried in his strength, was ruined by it. *Absolom*, that was proud of his Hair, it helpt to hang him, 2 *Sam.* 18. 9. Let every one then take notice of his sin by the suffering, and silence murmuring.

V. Caryl on Job 15. 25. Obs. 1. p. 131. *Greenhil* on Ezek. 7. 18. p. 75.

There was one *Martin* a vile man, that threatned to slit a godly Ministers nose in Piedmount, that was assaulted by a Woolf, which bit off his nose, so that he dyed thereof mad. *Fox* Book of Martyrs, 2 Vol. p. 202.

We have now seen the Sins that ruined *Israel*, viz. Idolatry, Superstition, Apostasie, Oppression, Luxury, Tyranny, Injustice, and Carnal-confidence, &c. If these Sins reign in *England*, what can we expect but that the Lord should send some *Assyrian* upon us, to avenge the quarrel of his Covenant on us? &c.

FINIS.

AN EXPOSITION, WITH Practical OBSERVATIONS UPON The Seventh Chapter of *Amos*.

VERSE 1, 2, 3.

Thus hath the Lord God shewed unto me, and behold, he formed Grashoppers in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth; and loe it was the latter growth after the Kings mowings.

And it came to pass after they had made an end of eating the grass of the Land, then I said, O Lord forgive I beseech thee, by whom shall Jacob *arise? for hee is small.*

The Lord repented for this, it shall not be, saith the Lord.

THis Chapter contains the Sixth Sermon of *Amos*, wherein are three Visions, to which are annex the issue and operation of them, *vers.* 10, 11, 12.

The Prophet had before plainly and clearly set down Gods Judgements against this People, that none might complaine of obscurity; yet now hee

comes to speak more mystically, in five Types and Visions, if by any means he might work upon them. Two Visions wee have, *Chap.* 8. 1, *&c.* & 9. 1, *&c.* and three in the nine first Verses of this Chapter, setting forth the patience and long-suffering of God towards this rebellious People.

The three Types or Similies are of

Grashoppers, Fire, A Plumb-line,	Which adumbrate three Judgements,	Famine, War, and utter destruction.

The first Judgement which *Amos* saw was an army of Grashoppers, Locusts, or Green-worms, which should devour the Grass and Corn, and this shadowed out the want of all things, *vers.* 1, 2.

2 That of *Fire*, devouring the great deep, denotes Warre, with the miseries that attend it, *vers.* 4. Both these had ruined *Israel*, but that at the mediation and intercession of the Prophet they were kept off for a time, *vers.* 2, 3, 5, 6. the duty of a faithful Pastor is to Pray and Preach, *Amos* doth both these; he shewes them their Sins, and Gods Judgements due unto them for them, yet withall he prayes for the averting of them, and was heard for that time, till at last the malady was past cure.

3 That of a *Plumb-line* in the hand of God, signified the utter overthrow both of the Oeconomical, Political, and Ecclesiastical estate of the Kingdom. God had measured out a time for them to repent in, but they were become incurable, and therefore the Lord here threatens to spare them no longer, and to pass by them no more, *vers.* 8. not yet to accept of any more mediation for them; and therefore we doe not read that ever the Prophet interceded for the averting of this Judgement, as he had done for the former; so long as there was hope hee prayed for them, but since they were incorrigible he forbeare.

4 We have the slanderous accusation of *Amaziah* the Priest of *Bethel* (who being netled with the Prophesie, and freedome of speech used by this plain and down-right Prophet against both King and Kingdom) first to King *Jeroboam* the second against *Amos*, under pretence of being a seditious, turbulent person, and one that had conspired against the

the King, *vers.* 10, 11. Amos *hath conspired against the King.*

2 The more to incense the King against him, he aggravates his Crimes, as first, that he acted this Treason, not secretly, but openly: *He hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel.*

2 That the People were much troubled at his Doctrine, to the hazard of the Kingdome: *The Kingdome is not able to bear his words.*

3 Here is *Amaziahs* fraudulent advice, under pretence of love and kindness, he would not have *Amos* come any more to *Bethel*, least he should run himself into danger; and therefore he adviseth him to pack out of the Kingdome with all speed, and to get into *Judeah* his owne Country, and to Prophesie there. *Vers.* 12.

4 We have *Amos* his bold reply to this false Prophets calumniations, *vers.* 14, 15. where he asserts and justifies his calling, shewing,

1 Negatively, that he was no Prophet, nor Prophets Son.

2 Affirmatively, *That he was an Herdsman.*

3 How he was called to be a Prophet, he came not of his owne accord to the work, but the Lord said to me, *Go Prophesie*, vers. 15.

4 Here is *Amos* his Charge, to which he was primarily sent, and that was to the ten Tribes, *vers.* 15. *Go Prophesie to Israel*; he durst not therefore forsake his Charge assigned him by God, and flee into *Judea*, (as *Amaziah* would have had him) but he resolved to stand his ground, and keep to his Commission, and preach to *Israel* though he dyed for it, as he did, being slaine (say some) by *Amaziahs* Son.

5 Here is a five-fold Judgement threatned by *Amos* against this Persecuting Prelate, *vers.* 17. he should suffer in his Wife, in his Children, in his Possessions, in his owne Person, and in the whole Kingdome, which he should see goe into Captivity.

Ver. 1.

Thus hath the Lord God shewed unto me, and behold he formed Grashoppers in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth; and loe it was the latter growth after the Kings mowings.

IN this Chapter we have three Visions, the first whereof is that of *devouring Locusts*, which left little or nothing behind them. Where we have,

1 The Person revealing the Vision to the Prophet, and that is, the Lord, *Thus hath the Lord God shewed me*, in a Prophetical Vision, the Judgements which he is about to bring upon *Israel*. This he mentions to procure the more authority to what he spake, that they might see they were not figments, or dreams of his owne inventing.

See Dr. Thomas Taylor on Amos 8. 11. p. 215. 216. fol.

2 Here is the Vision it self, or what the Lord shewed him, and that is *Grashoppers, and behold he formed Grashoppers*. He did not call out Grashoppers already made, but he saw the Lord forming and framing a new Army of Grashoppers out of the dust of the earth, or the like; which to Gods Omnipotency was as easie, as to bring out an Army of Grashoppers already made.

Jotser, fictor, à Jatsar, finxit, formavit, Isa. 43. 1. Zach. 12. 1.

Obj. *But most call these Grashoppers Locusts, and so the very same word is rendred*, Isa. 33. 4. *so that what shall we call them, Grashoppers, or Locusts?*

I answer, both; that is, they are Grashopper-Locusts. To clear this, you must know that there were several sorts of Locusts mentioned in the Scripture, some were silent, and some vocal; some good, and for food, *Mat.* 3. 4. Others were obnoxious and hurtful, as here in the text, and of these there were three sorts:

See Ainsworth on Levit. 11. 22.

1 *Locust-Solhem*,
2 *Locust-Hargel*, } Levit. 11. 22.
3 *Locust-Hagab*.

Gob, Gobe, Locustæ, bruchi, à radice Gabah, exaltavit, quia elevant & exaltant pedes.

And this last is the Locust-Grashopper in the text. It was a devouring Insect, that went in great multitudes together, eating up all before them; and so bringing a Famine on the places where

where they came, *Joel* 1. 4, 6. & 2. 11. they are called a Nation, and an Army of Vermine, for their swarmes, and multitudes.

Q. A *second Quere is, VVhether these Locusts must be taken Literally, or Metaphorically, properly or symbolically?*

Ans. 1. They may be taken literally for an Army of Insects, which devour the fruites of the earth, and so cause a famine; this is most genuine here, and it was one of those rods with which God chastned *Israel*, Amos 4. 9. as for War, he speaks of that, *vers.* 4. but this especially relates to famine, and some Judgements begun before the time of *Jeroboam* the second.

2 Others take them Metaphorically, for any kind of devastation or wasting whatsoever; or else for the *Assyrians*, which like so many Locusts should over-run the Land of *Israel*, and devour all before them. Hence the *Assyrian* is compared to a Razor, which should shave them even to the skin, *Isa.* 7. 20.

3 Here is the *Time* these Locusts were formed, and that is, 1. Generally, *in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth.* 2. More particularly, It was the latter growth after the Kings mowings. After the first fleece was mowed off for the use of the Kings horses, which was wont to be sooner than the common mowth. Locusts love not to feed on ripe and hard things: their delight is in young and tender things; and therefore they are very destructive to Immanths, and new-sowen fields. These hurtful Vermine God sent in abundance amongst them.

And here againe Interpreters differ, 1 Some take this mowing or shearing of the Grass for the grazing with the Kings sheep, whose feeding is called a cropping of the grass. But this hath no rooting in the text; for though the word doe signifie shearings, yet it is used for mowen grass, *Psal.* 72. 6.

Ter centum nivei tondent dumeta juvenci. Virg. Georg. l. 1.

Achar gizze bammalech, post tonsionem regis, non gregis.

2 Others take it, for the mowing not only of Grass, but of Corn also in the Fields; for Husbandmen (especially in those fruitful regions) used to mow their luxuriant Corn, that it might thicken and stand the better; and if this latter blade were eaten by Insects or Locusts, the Harvest was lost, and Famine ensued. The vulgar Latine mistaking the Original, render it, *Serotinus imber*, the latter rain, but the word is,

Lekesh, herba serotina, sive cordum) the latter mowth, and not the latter rain; and here again some fly to Metaphors, and conceive that this mowing *adumbrates* the devastation of *Israel* by the *Assyrian*; as fields when they are mowen, and their fleece is gone, are naked and deformed, so God would raise up the *Assyrian* that should rob them of their riches, and fleece them for their sins.

The flourishing Grass notes the flourishing condition of *Israel*, but they abusing that condition, the Lord mowed them. 1. More lightly and overly, by *Pul* King of *Assyria*, 1 Chro. 5. 26. 2. More severely, by *Benhadad* King of *Syria*, who afflicted them very sore, and gained much of their Land and riches from them.

3 There was a latter growth in the dayes of *Jeroboam* the second, when *Israel* began to flourish, and recover its losses, 2 *King*. 14. 25. but after this they grew worse and worse, till the Lord swept them out of the Land, and would hear no more prayers for them.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Formerly God revealed his mind to the Prophets (as he did here to* Amos*) by Types and Visions*, Jer. 1. 11. & 24. 1. Ezek. 1. Heb. 1. 1. See more of this, *Amos* 8. 1. *Obs.* 3.

2 *All our afflictions come from God.*

See D. *Thomas Taylor* on *Amos* 8. 11, 12. p. 224. folio.

It is he that forms the Locusts, sends Fire, metes out the very Time, Quantity, Quality, and Duration of all our sufferings; whatever it be, it is he that forms it, *Jer.* 18. 11. there is no evil of this kind in the City, but the Lord doth it, *Amos* 3. 6. This must make us patient and silent, since it is the Lord that doth it, *Psal.* 39. 9.

3 *God hath Armies of Insects, and little contemptible Creatures wherewith to punish disobedient people.*

He needs not men to destroy us, he hath Froggs and Flies, Lice and Locusts, and these shall doe it, *Exod.* 10. 14. *Deut.* 28. 38, 42. 2 *Chron.* 7. 13. *Psal.* 78. 46. *Joel* 1. 4. much of Gods might is seen in these little Armies, they all fulfill the word of Gods command. Let none then murmure at second causes, but still look up to the first, least by fretting at our troubles, we double them.

Nec in ulla magis quam in his tota natura est. Pliny *Nat. Hist. l.* 11. *c.* 1.

4 *Natu-*

4 *Naturally we are very stupid and senseless under Gods hand.*

Though he smite us, yet we grieve not, *Isa.* 9. 12, 13. *Jer.* 5. 3. and though his hand be lifted up against us, yet we will not see, *Isa.* 26. 11. The Judgement it self here was visible, and yet they had not eyes to see it: yea though the Prophet held it forth to them by a sensible Type, and useth a double *Ecce*, (Behold, loe) to excite them and quicken attention. No wonder that our Saviour cryed, O hard and slow of heart, not to beleeve what God hath spoken by his Words and Works, *Luke* 24. 25.

5 *When People are most prosperous, many times they are nearest to fall.*

Israel had success and victories but a little before, there was a shooting up of the latter growth, they lived in peace and plenty forty one years, they were grown rich, proud, and secure, and then comes the Locust and devoures them; no sooner had they gotten a little greenness, but the *Assyrian* devours it. As Herbs when they come to flower, begin to wither; or as the Sun when it comes to the *Zenith*, then it declines; so man in his best estate is altogether vanity, *Psal.* 39. 5. not only in his worst estate, when Old age hath seized on him, but in his flourishing and most prosperous condition, man is but a vaine thing. Be jealous then over your selves when you abound with those Creature comforts, be like Pigeons, when they fare best they are most fearful. It is good to think of War in times of Peace, and of Famine in times of Plenty, we know not what changes may come in the world, it is good to fear the worst, as *Job* did, *Job* 3. 25.

6 *Gods Judgements usually are gradual.*

As men sin gradually, and grow from one degree of wickedness to another; so God is gradual in his punishments. First, he begins with lesser evils, and they being slighted he brings forth greater, and plagues men seven times more according to their sins. 1. He begins here with Locusts, and destroyes the fruites of the earth. 2. He takes away part of their Land from them. 3. He takes away the whole Kingdom, and sends away the people into captivity.

VER.

VERSE 2.

And it came to passe, that when they had made an end of eating the Grasse of the Land, then I said, O Lord forgive I beseech thee, by whom shall Jacob *arise, for hee is small?*

THe Prophet understanding the Mystery of the Vision, and seeing how things grew to extremity, and observing that all the fruits of the earth both Corn and Grass were like to be suddenly consumed by the devouring Locusts, and so a fearful Famine would come upon the Land; he betakes himself to his Prayers, as the best remedy against such a malady, 1 *King*. 8. 37. he deprecates the Judgement, and prevails. So that here is,

1 The Judgement threatned, and that is the *Famine*, one of Gods sore Judgements, *Ezek*. 14. 21.

2 Here is the means that was used for the stopping of the execution of it, and that was the prayers of the Prophet, and other good people. This Prayer is *Argumentative*, it is short, but sweet; little in words, but full of matter; little for quantity, but full of faith, as appears by the speedy answer, and the good effect which it had. God delights not in babling, or multiplicity of words, *Eccles*. 5. 2. It is the faith and fervour of the Person praying, and not the bare words which God regards.

The Prophet useth two Arguments, to move the Lord to shew mercy to them. The first is drawn from the Covenant of Free-grace, which God made with his people, it is *Jacob* that is in distress, *by whom shall* Jacob *arise? q. d.* I plead not for *Babylonians*, or *Egyptians*, *Assyrians*, or any barbarous Nation, that know thee not; but my suit is to thee in the behalf of thine owne Church and chosen, it is for *Jacob* thine inheritance, which is near and dear to thee, that hath made thy servant thus bold to speak unto thee, *Psa*. 10. 16. & 115. 4. *But* [illegible] *for*, 2. 12. Remember O Lord thy Covenant made with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, [illegible] thy people, thy thine inheritance; there is nothing works more upon God than the remembrance of the Covenant of Free-grace which he

he hath made with his people; he delights in that, *Deut.* 7. 9, 12. and therefore the Saints so oft urge it, *Exod.* 32. 13. *Psal.* 74. 20.

By *Jacob* here is primarily meant the ten Tribes, or the *Israelites* which were the posterity of *Jacob*; though *Judah* be not totally excluded, for *Amos* oft glanceth at them also, *Amos* 2. 5. & 6. 1.

A second Argument is drawn from the shattered, sad condition [illegible] this People were in, they were little, very little and low: O Lord forgive I beseech thee, by whom shall *Jacob* arise? for he is small; He is small and low in

Katon, parvulus, the word is used for small things, Zach. 4. 10.

Men, Money, Strength,	in	Spirituals and Temporals,	in	Church and State.

1 They were little and low in Temporals, both in Number, Riches, and Power, they were much impaired and wasted, by various calamities of Sword, Famine, and Pestilence, as appears by *chap.* 4. & 2 *King.* 14. 26. when *Jeroboam* the second came to the Throne, *the Lord saw that the affliction of* Israel *was very bitter, for there was none shut up or left, nor any helper in* Israel.

2 They were low in Spirituals, in *Ahabs* time the Worship of God was generally corrupted, his Truths despised, his Ministers persecuted, 1 *King.* 18. 4. and such a general face of Idolatry had over-spread the Land, that *Elijah* complains he was left alone, 1 *King.* 19. 10. and in the ninth verse of this Chapter, the Lord threatens to lay their Sanctuaries wast, and that they should have a famine not of Bread, but of the Word of God, *chap.* 8. 11, 12.

Thus the Prophet pleads, not *Jacobs* merit, but Gods mercy and free-grace, so much the original word imports, to be favourable, and propitious, to spare and pardon. The word is often used in the Law for forgiveness, upon oblation and intercession made by the Priest, *Numb.* 14. 19. *Levit.* 4. 20, 26, &c. *Psal.* 25. 11. He first beggs for pardon of their sin, for he knew right well, if the cause were removed the effect would quickly cease. Neither doth he plead *Jacobs* excellency, but his misery, to move the Lord to shew him mercy.

Salach, pepercit, propitius fuit, condonavit.

q. d. *Consider O Lord the low and sad estate of thy people,*

they are low in Temporals, and low in Spirituals, and few in number, and if thou still goe on thus with thy Judgements, all must perish, and there will be none left to praise thee; if thou should'st enter into judgement with thy Servants, there were no abiding. But as it is the glory of a man to pass by an offence, so it will make much for thy glory to pardon and pass by the sins and transgressions of thy poor afflicted people. It makes not for thine honour, nor doth it suit with thy nature to afflict the afflicted, nor to oppress the oppressed; Hold then thy hand, spare thy P[illegible] and pitty thy distressed flock.

Thus this good Prophet did commiserate their condition, and intercedes for the life of those who sought his death; it is true, he had plainly and powerfully reproved them for their sins, according to his place and calling, yet that they might see he did nothing out of hatred, but by office and command from God, not out of passion, but out of compassion to them; he now prays for them, and prevails.

By whom shall Jacob *arise?*

Or, who shall raise *Jacob*? or how should he subsist, if thou still pursue him with thy Judgements? The Original word *Kum* hath many significations, which hath caused these various lections; it signifies to arise, to stand, to establish, and abide. Some render the word Transitively, for to raise, *Who shall raise* Jacob? *i. e.* who shall raise and restore him, and make him happy in the enjoyment both of Temporals and Spirituals? Thus the sense is the same, take it which way you will.

By whom shall he arise?

The Prophet could not see who should effect this, and therefore he asketh the question, *By whom shall he arise?* he could discerne no visible means how the weakness of *Jacob* should be strengthened, and the lowness of *Jacob* be exalted, and therefore he goes unto God by Prayer. As when the enemy is high we are apt to question, Who shall bring downe these Gyants, these sons of *Anak*, these great *Zanzummims* of the world, for they are high and mighty? So when the Church is low, and lies in the dust, our unbelief is apt to question its arising, *By whom shall* Jacob *arise, for he is low?*

OB-

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Afflictions are a means to bring us to God.*

When all the fruit of the Land was almost devoured, now comes Praying, *Spare Lord.* We are all too like *Joab* in this, *Absalom* sent twice for him, but he would not come, at last he set fire on his Corn fields, and *then* Joab *arose and came*, 2 *Sam.* 14. 30, 31. Hence the Lord takes it for granted, that *in our affliction we will seek him diligently*, Hos. 5. *ult.* and so they did, *Hos.* 6. 1. and so did the Woman of *Canaan*, Mat. 15. 22. and the Prodigal, *Luke* 15. and *Jehosaphat*, 2 *Chron.* 20. 12. and *David*, Psal. 120. 1. and *Paul*, 2 Cor. 12. 9.

2 *In Gods Ministers there must be a due temperature of sharpness and sweetness, of severity and mercy.*

They must have a holy anger against sin, yet mourn withall for the hardness of mens hearts; so did our Saviour, *Mar.* 3. 5. so *Lot* reproved the *Sodomites*, yet calls them brethren, *Gen.* 19. 7. and *Moses* in his zeal was angry at the people for their Idolatry, yet prayes for them, *Psal.* 106. So *Amos* here sharply inveighs against the sins of this People, yet takes up a Lamentation for them, *Amos* 5. 1. and here intercedes for them. Our zeal must be mixt with love, though we may and must sometimes reprove men sharply, *Titus* 1. 13. yet must we not forbear praying for them, 1 *Sam.* 12. 23. so did the Vinitor intercede for the barren Fig-tree, *Luke* 13. 6, 7, 8, 9. every Minister must be *Adamas & magnes*, he must harden his face like a flint, and have browes of brass to oppose the wicked; yet must he withall be a Load-stone, by his amiable, tender, and compassionate carriage to win them to Christ; lying in the breach for them, and running hazards to save them from destruction, *Ezek.* 22. 30.

3 *As it is the duty of all the godly, so especially of Gods Ministers to sympathize with Gods People in their misery, and to intercede for them at the Throne of grace.*

We must not only preach, but also pray for our people; as it is their duty to pray for us, 2 *Thes.* 3. 2, 3. so it is our duty to pray for them, especially in their troubles; it is both *commanded*, Joel 1. 13. & 2. 17. Ephes. 6. 18. and *commended* to us by the examples of the Saints. *Abraham* intercedes for

Sodom, *Moses* for *Israel*, Exod. 32. 31, 32. *Jeremy* for the *Jewes*, Jer. 18. 20. yea so zealous was he in praying for them, that the Lord is faine to bid him hold, *Jer.* 7. 16. How earnestly did *Paul* pray for the *Jewes*, though they were his deadly enemies, *Rom.* 10. 1. *Phil.* 1. 4, 9. *Colos.* 1. 3, 9. 1 *Thes.* 1. 2. As Natural fathers, so Spiritual ones (in a spiritual sense) should lay up a stock of prayers for their People. Thus the living are commanded to pray for the living, *Jam.* 5. 16. but we have neither Precept nor President of any that ever prayed for the dead, now whatsoever is not of faith is sin; but such Prayers have no foundation in the Word of God, therefore they cannot be of faith. Such prayers doe neither avayl the Saints in Heaven, nor the Damned in Hell, because both have an irrecoverable doome past upon them, as is fully proved by a Learned Pen.

Willets Synopf. Papism. controv. 9. Q. 2. p. 415. & Sharpius loc. com. de Purgatorio, p. 272, &c.

4. *Our Prayers must be Argumentative Prayers.*

We must stirre up our selves that we may lay hold on God; using Arguments to move the Lord to pitty us. So doth *Amos* here, and so did *Abraham*, Gen. 18. 2, 3, &c. and *Jacob*, Gen. 32. 11, 12. and *Moses*, Exod. 32. 11, 12, 13. & *Ezra* 9. 9. & *Neh.* 9. & *Dan.* 9. & *David*, Psal. 79. 6, 7. & 88. 9. to 13. & 90. 13, 14. & 130. 3, 4. especially we should press the Covenant; so doth *Amos* here, and *David*, Psal. 74. 20.

See my Com. on Psal. 82. 8, p. 178.

5. *In our Prayers we must plead mercy, and not merit.*

The Prophet here beggs for pardon and forgiveness because they were low, so doth *David*, Psal. 79, 8, 9. our Merit is Gods Mercy; it must needs be so, since all our righteousness is as filthy raggs. Hence *Nehemiah* when he had done great things for God, yet being conscious to himself of many infirmities, he beseecheth the Lord to spare him, according to the greatness of his mercy, *Neh.* 13. 22. So *Daniel*, a man highly beloved, yet beggs for mercy and for pardon, *Dan.* 9. 18, 23.

6 *We must be earnest with God for the pardon of our sin.*

So is the Prophet here, O Lord I beseech thee, pardon the sin of this People. He knew right well that sin was the cause of all their sorrow, and when this peccant humour was once removed, the effect would cease; and therefore the Church prayes, *Take away our iniquity and receive us graciously*, Hos. 14. 2. the godly can bear any suffering, but not sin. When the

Plague

Plague lay upon the people, *David* cries, *Take away the sin of thy Servant, and then the Plague will cease.*

7. *Gods owne people by profession may be brought to a very low condition, both in Temporals and Spirituals.*

So it was with *Israel* here, which made the Prophet question, *By whom shall he arise?* He was brought so low that hee could neither raise himself, neither was there any other that could help him up; their strength was so exhausted that there was no visible effectual means of their restauration. We may say of all Creature-comforts as *Job* said of Wisdome, *Job* 28. 12, 13, 14. Where shall Wisedome be found? the Earth saith, it is not in me; and the Depth saith, it is not in me, &c. so, where shall ayd in troublous times be found? The Earth saith, It is not in me; Friends say, It is not in us; and Riches say, It is not in us, &c. It is only to be found in the Almighty; we are never so little or low but he can help us, there is nothing too high or too hard for him; though Salvation be not in our Hills, yet it is in Gods hand, *Jer.* 3. 23. he is the Lord of Hosts, and hath all power at command; and therefore the Prophet betakes himself to his Prayers as his best refuge, *O Lord I beseech thee spare thy people.* This is one reason why the Lord lets things run to extremity, that he may drive us to our Prayers, as we may see in *Hesters* case. Now if ever we would raise a Land out of the dust,

See more in M. *Good* his Fast Ser. on Amos 7. 5. preacht 1646.

1 We must raise our *Prayers*, be fervent in them, it is none but wrastling *Jacobs* that shall become prevailing *Israels*, Hos. 12. 4.

See more in my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 9. p. 182, 456, 459.

2 Raise your *Faith*, this layes hold on God, and ingageth him in the Quarrel, whilst Creatures oppose. Creatures they may make some resistance, but when Omnipotency comes against impotency, there is no abiding. See what great things faith hath done, *Heb.* 11.

3 Raise your *Holiness*, grow therein, be holy in all manner of conversation; God never yet destroyed an holy, obedient people, such holy ones are the glory of a Land, and upon all this glory there shall be a defence, *Isa.* 4. 5.

Verse 3.

The Lord repented for this, It shall not be, saith the Lord.

Hic opponit se murum Propheta, ut avertat iram Dei, ne perdat, nec fuit frustra oratio ejus. Luther.

HEre we have the success and good effect of the Prophets Prayer, he prayes in faith and is heard, the Lord holds his hand, and saith it shall not be; so willing is the Lord to be intreated for to spare his Church and People! *The Lord repented for this.* He changed not his eternal Decree, but suspended the full and final execution of it, according to his eternal Decree. When God is said to repent, it is an usual Anthropopathy, and speaking after the manner of men according to our capacity, *Gen. 6. 6. Exod. 32. 14. Jer. 26. 19.* for God is not as man that he should repent, *1 Sam. 15. 29.* and therefore it is added exegetically, *This shall not be*, it was no change in God, but only a stopping of the execution of the Judgement threatned, according to Gods Decree, such threatnings being conditional (as I have shewed before) what in justice he might have done, and have done them no wrong, yet such is his Mercy and Clemency that he will not doe it, but waits yet longer for their return; *It shall not be* (saith the Lord) whose word is good security, the Locusts shall be recalled, they shall not devour *Israel*; I will at thy intercession spare them yet a little longer.

Fuit mutatio rei, non Dei; facti, non consilii.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *The Prayers of the faithful are very powerful and successful.*

Continet hic locus insignem consolationem, & illustre exemplum, quàm sit efficax, & quàm multum possit oratio fidelis. Luther.

The Prophet can but speak here, and he presently speeds. What is it that Prayer hath not done? It is a kind of Omnipotent engine that layes all flat before it; if any thing can help at a dead lift, it is this or nothing. All things are possible to faith, no Mountains of dangers, fears, or difficulties, but it removes them, *Mark 9. 23.* this binds as it were the hands of God, and commands the Commander of all things, *Isa. 45. 11.* The effectual fervent prayer of one righteous man (how much more of many) avayls much, *Jam. 5. 16.* to these the Promise runs, *Psal. 34. 17. Joel 2. 17, 18.* God never sayes

to

to the seed of *Jacob*, Seek my face in vaine, *Isa.* 45. 19. The Prayer of an holy *Moses*, *Samuel*, *Daniel*, &c. what hath it not done? If there had been but ten righteous persons in those five Sodomitical Cities, that is but two in a City, they had been spared. We should therefore love the godly, and value them according to their true worth, who can doe such great things by their prayers. It is the happiness of a Nation to have such men in it; praying Saints are the Pillars and Supporters of the world, and the blessings of a Land, *Isa.* 19. 24. they are such a blessing as preserves all other blessings amongst a people; they are the strength of a Land, *Zach.* 12. 5. the walls and bulwarks of a place; to save such praying holy ones, God will destroy both Kings and Kingdoms, *Isa.* 43. 3, 4. the Lord is alwayes nigh to help and to deliver them, *Deut.* 4. 7. they advance Gods Name, and set the Crown upon Gods head, giving the glory of all they have, or can doe to him alone, and therefore the Lord delights to make them glorious. So that the prayers of good men are very precious things, *Gen.* 20. 7. *Job* 42. 8.

Obj. *The Prayers of an holy* Amos *might prevail much, but we are no Prophets?*

A. *Amos* was a man subject to infirmities as we are, and he was not heard as a Prophet, but for the Promises which all beleevers have interest in, as well as Prophets.

VERSE 4, 5, 6.

Thus hath the Lord shewed me, and behold the Lord God called to contend by fire, and it devoured the great deep, and did eat up a part.

Then said I, O Lord God, cease I beseech thee, by whom shall Jacob *arise, for he is small?*

The Lord repented for this, This also shall not be, saith the Lord God.

WEE are now come to the second Vision, and that is of *Fire*, denoting a greater Judgement than the former; Locusts devour but the blade and blossoms, but fire consumes both roots and fruits. The Lord had wasted many Rods

Rods in vaine upon them, he now casts them into the fire, to see whether that will melt or mend them. These three Visions are a kind of Gradation; that of the Locusts was sad, that of Fire was worse, and that of a Plumb-line was worst of all. This Vision though it differ in matter, yet for method it is alike.

1 Here is the Preamble, or Preface to the Vision, *Thus hath the Lord God shewed me.*

2 Here is the Vision it self, with an *Ecce* in the front of it, *Behold, the Lord God called to contend by fire*; that is, by War, which the King of *Assyria* a fierce enemy should bring upon them.

3 Here is the fruit and effect of this fire.

1 *It devoured the great deep*, or it devoured a great abyss, and depth of waters. This fire devoured not only wood and waters above the earth, but also the waters inclosed in the hollow parts of the earth, from whence fountains and rivers doe issue, *Gen.* 7. 11.

Tehom rabba, multiplicity of waters, or the deep Sea, Exo. 15. 5. Isa. 51. 10. i.e. *Populi, domorum & opum immensitatem. A Lapide.*

By this devouring fire most understand the Kingdome of *Syria*, which was laid waste and totally devoured by *Tiglath-pileser* King of *Assyria*, 2 King. 16. 9. and by the abyss of waters is here meant multitudes of people, as *Ezek.* 31. 4. *Revel.* 17. 1. the Whore sits upon many waters; that is, she hath rule and power over many people.

Chelech, Pars, Portio, Possessio, Josh. 15. 13. Psal. 16. 5.

2 After this, *it did eate up a part*, and had devoured all but that the Prophet interceded for them; or it consumed a peece of the Land, or a part of the portion and possession of Gods people. By this is understood some part of *Israel*, viz. two Tribes and a half, which *Tiglath-Pileser* carried away Captive into *Assyria*, and thereupon is said to eate up a part of *Israel*, 2 *King.* 15. 29. 2 *Chron.* 5. 26. *Isa.* 9. 1, 2.

3 Here is the Prophets sympathy, and sense of this Judgement, *vers.* 5. it put him upon Prayer, and made him deprecate the averting of it. Then said I, *O Lord God cease I beseech thee, by whom shall* Jacob *arise, for he is small?* It is the very same Prayer, and the same Arguments that he used before, *vers.* 2. only in the place of forgiving, he puts *ceasing*; Cease Lord this thine anger against thy people; and the sheep of thy pasture; hold thy hand, for if thou thus goe on to afflict thy people, who shall remaine of *Jacob*? surely none at all. This for-

orbearing being a visible effect of pardon, he desires that God would manifest it; and so it is the same Prayer in effect with the former.

1 *Obs.* Hence note, *that it is lawful (as occasion requires) to pray the same Prayer, and use the same Arguments as formerly we have done.*

Amos doth so here, and speeds. So did Christ, *Mat.* 27. 44. he prayed the third time, saying the same words, this he did out of fervency of spirit.

2 *Obs. We must persevere in Prayer for the people of God.*

As their misery doth renew, so must our Prayers for them be renewed. Thus did *Amos*, God threatens a second Judgement, and *Amos* by a second Prayer averts that also. The work is good, and no difficulties should discourage us. The Church is near and dear to God, tis his *Beulah* and *Hephzibah*, Isa. 62. 4. his beloved Spouse, and we never please him better than when we are importunate with him for *Sions* good. Hence he so oft commands us to pray for the peace of *Jerusalem*, and promiseth that they shall prosper who love it; yea he bids us command him when it is for the good of his Sons and Daughters, *Isa.* 45. 11. See more in my Com. on Psal. 82. 8 p. 182.

4 Here is the good success and happy issue of his Prayer, he obtains his request, since it is for *Israel* that he prayes, it is but ask and have. By his Prayers and Tears he extinguisheth this fire when nothing else could doe it, and gets the Judgement suspended for a time, to see if their hard hearts would at length relent and return. This may incourage us much in this duty of Prayer.

The Lord repented also for this: this also shall not be, vers. 6. I will hold my hand (saith God) the fire which I threatned shall not yet come, the Land shall not be destroyed at this time. So gracious is the Lord, and ready to forgive, and so quickly he repents him of the evil which he intends against his people, especially when his Ministers intercede for them, *Joel* 2. 13. he afflicts not willingly, Judgement is his strange work, and Fury is not in him, *Isa.* 27. 4.

But though the Lord at the intercession of his Servants may suspend his fiery Judgements here (though oft-times hee pleads with them here by Fire, Sword, Famine, &c. *Isa.* 66. 15, 16. *Ezek.* 38. 22.) yet without repentance the fire of the

last Day will certainly devour them; God will then contend with fire, and execute the fierceness of his fury upon the workers of iniquity.

Brevitas orationis Pathos habet. Aretius.

3 *Obs.* Hence note, *That short Prayers full of faith and fervency, may prevail very much with God for a People.*

It is not the loudness, or the length, or the neat expressions which take with God, 1 *King.* 18. 26. *Eccles.* 5. 2. *Mat.* 6. 7. & 7. 21. But it is the faith and sincerity of him that prayes; poor broken Prayers coming from a broken heart are of great worth in the sight of God, *Matth,* 15. 25. *Eliahs* Prayer was short and pithy, and prevailed, 1 *King.* 18. 36. so *Psal.* 6. 3. *My soul is sore vexed, but thou O Lord how long,* viz. *wilt thou delay to help me?* It is an abrupt broken speech, but God can pick sense out of our non-sense.

Prayer is a work of the Heart, and not of the Tongue, words are but the out-side of Prayer, it is the Hearts desire which God eyes and respects, and if thy affections fly *aloft,* though thy words doe but creep, yet thy faith shall get what thy words cannot; yea if thou canst not speak, yet if thou canst weep, God will hear the voyce of thy weeping; Tears have a voyce, *Psal.* 6. 8. as well as words.

The Lord called to contend with fire.

Kara, vocavit, promulgavit, clamavit. Prov. 12. 13. *Zach.* 7. 1

Or, the Lord *proclaimed* that he would contend with fire, or plead, that is, punish them with fire. Thus *Hos.* 4. 1. The Lord hath a Controversie, that is, a Plea or Process, not only verbal, but real; that is, he had Judgements ready to execute on them. This *contending* notes *Israels* obstinacy; we use not to contend, or goe to suit, till we have tried all other means to get our right, yet cannot get it, then we are constrained to contend. As War, so Law, is, or ought to be our last refuge. God had used all means to win this People, but in vaine, and therefore he is now constrained to *contend with Fire and Sword* against them.

Deus juridicè citavit, & in jus ad suum tribunal vocavit terram Israel, provocans ad ignem, & litem illi intendens, ut ageret eam ream ignis. Mariana. Larib baesh, ad litigandum in i. e. *cum igne. Rib significat in judicio litigare, contendere, & causam agere,* Isa. 1. 18. & 3. 13.

Q. *But what is meant by* Fire *here?*

A. Interpreters vary. 1. Some take it *Literally,* for some extraordinary fire which should fall from Heaven and consume

sume them, as it did *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and *Aarons* Sons, *Levit.* 10. 2. and *Jobs* Sheep and Servants, *Job* 1. 16. So (say some) God called his Angels to execute judgement on these wicked men, and to contend or plead for him by fire in their destruction.

2 By *fire* others understand a *great Drought*, when the violent heat of the Sun-beams should pierce the deepest parts of the earth, below the roots of the Corn and Trees, and so should make a perfect famine. This extream heat and scorching of the Sun is called a Fire, *Joel* 1. 19, 20. *A fire hath consumed the Pastures of the Wilderness, and a flame hath burnt up all the trees of the field*; that is, the great heat of the Sun like to a fire hath consumed all.

3 By *Fire* may be meant the Wrath of God, which was now inflamed against this stubborn People, and this is the kindler of all Penal fires, and is oft in Scripture called *Fire*, *Job* 31. 12. *Isa.* 26. 11. *Amos* 5. 6. *Heb.* 12. *ult.*

4 And most genuinely: *Fire* is here taken *Metaphorically* for some direful and dreadful Judgement (for Fire of all the Elements is most terrible) which should consume their men, money, health, strength, *Job* 15. 31, 34. More especially, here it *adumbrates* War, which should be managed by some fiery, furious enemy, who like fire should wast and consume all before it. So *Ezek.* 20. 48. *Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee, which shall devour every green tree, and every dry tree*; that is, all sorts of people, both old and young, rich and poor; the fire of War shall consume them all. So *Numb.* 21. 28. *Isa.* 66. 15, 16. *Jer.* 48. 45. *Lam.* 2. 3. *Amos* 1. 4, 7, 10. & 2. 5.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *When lesser Judgements will not mend a People, God usually comes with greater.*

The devouring Locusts could not stir this people, God wil now see what the Fire will doe; Great impenitency calls for great punishment, *Levit.* 26. 18. But of this elsewhere. See my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. Obs. 4. p. 68.

2 *Sin is the great make-bate between God and his people.*

It breeds contention and dissention between them, God hath a Suit and an Action against such, *Hos.* 4. 1. God had a Controversie

troversie against *Israel*, and cites them to answer the Plea which he had against them for their ignorance, cruelty, swearing, lying, &c. God loves his Creature, as it is his Creature, but when it becomes a sinful, rebellious Creature, he abhors it, and delights in its destruction, *Prov.* 1. 26. This bred the Quarrel between God and the Old world, *Gen.* 6. 2, 3. and between him and *Jerusalem*, Jer. 30. 15. *Hos.* 12. 2. *Micha* 6. 2, 3. Sin bred the first Controversie and Quarrel between God and the Angels, and between God and *Adam*. This turns him who is sweetness it self, and mercy it self, into wrath and fury, *Isa.* 64. 5. it is sin that warres against God, and therefore no wonder if he warre against it; it is directly opposite to his holy Nature, *Psal.* 5. 5. and dishonours him in all his Attributes. Sinners deny his *Omniscience*, as if he did not see what they doe; and his *Omnipotence*, as if he were unable to punish; and his *Justice*, as if he would never call them to an account, &c. no wonder then if God have a quarrel with such.

See Dr. *Goodwins* Aggravat. of Sin, on Rom. 7. 13. p. 9, &c.

Sin warres against the *Lawes* of God, against the *Spirit* of God, *Isa.* 7. 13. *Ephes.* 4. 30. against the *Saints* of God, against the *wayes and Worship* of God, yea against *all* that is Gods. No wonder then if he contend by *Fire*, against that which so fiercely contends, and fights against him and his.

3 *Warre is a dreadful Judgement.*

It is one of Gods last and sore Rods, *Ezek.* 14. 21. hence it is compared here to fire, which is one of the most terrible elements that are. If the Lord should contend with Water, and send a floud upon the world, that were sad, but Fire, Fire is farre more terrible to the nature of man. As *Peace* is one of the choycest Mercies, so War is the saddest Judgement. Peace sweetens our blessings, and makes them blessings indeed. To have Houses, Goods, Lands, and be in continual danger of losing by enemies, imbitters all to us. Hence when the Lord would promise a choyce Mercy, he tells his People that hee will break the Bow and the Sword, and make them to lye down in safety, *Hos.* 2. 18. *Levit.* 26. 5, 6. *Job* 11. 19. *Isa.* 2. 4. & 33. 20. Hence the Psalmist calls upon Gods People to praise him for this mercy of mercies, in making our barres strong, and setling peace in our borders, *Psal.* 147. 12, 13, 14. It is in times of Peace, that Fields are tilled, the Gospel spreads,

See more on *Amos* 4. 10.

spreads, Learning increaseth, and the Church is edified, *Ezek.* 37. 26. *Acts* 9. 31.

[See more for Peace, *Sibel.* 1 Tom. p. 576, &c. D. *Tuckney*, Good day well improved, Mr. *Harvey* his Olive Branch, D. *Stoughtons* Ser. on Psal. 144. 15. D. *Tho. Taylors* Ser. fol. on Heb. 12. 14. p. 418. & D. *Gauden* on the same text. *Church* his Treasury, p. 309. *Barlow* on 2 Tim. 2. 22. p. 160.].

Verse 7, 8.

Thus he shewed me, and behold, the Lord stood upon a wall made by a Plumb-line, with a Plumb-line in his hand.

And the Lord said unto me, Amos *what seest thou? and I said a Plumb-line. Then said the Lord, behold I will set up a Plumb-line in the midst of my People* Israel, *I will not again pass by them any more.*

WEE are now come to the Third Vision, wherein the Lord sets forth the utter destruction of *Israel*, God had born long with their provocations, and waited long for their return, but since they were incorrigible and incurable, hee resolves now to make a final end with them, and to pass by and pardon them no more, but to destroy them by the Sword of *Salmanaser* King of *Assyria*; which is here typified by a *Plumb-line*. Where we have, 1. The Vision it self, *vers.* 7. 2. The explication of it, *vers.* 8, 9.

Thus he shewed me.

This is the usual Preface as before, *vers.* 1, 4.

And behold, the Lord stood upon a wall made by a Plumb-line, or on the wall of a Plumb-line (it is an usual Hebraism) that is, the Lord stood on a perpendicular wall, such a one as was curiously made, and exactly squared by the Plummer. *Gnal chomat anach, super murum perpendiculi.*

The word *Anach* which signifies a Plumb-line, is variously rendred.

1 Some call it a Masons Truel (so the vulgar Latin) with which they build and parget walls, for strength and elegancy; so God had been the strength and glory of *Israel*. *Trulla cementarii.*

stabat super murum adamantinum.

2 The Septuagint, the Syriack, and the Arabick render it thus, I saw the Lord standing on an *Adamantine wall*, with an Adamant Stone in his hand; implying that God had been the firme defender of his people, and a wall of Adamant to them which no Hammer could break. Both these are truthes, but they have no foundation in the text.

3 The word *Anach* (which is used only in this text) genuinely signifies a *Plumb-line*, which Masons and Carpenters use for the keeping of their work straight and even. Thus *Zerubbabel* when he was to build the Temple, is said to have a Plummet, or Tin-stone in his hand, that is a Measuring-line, to which a weight of Tin, Stone, or Lead was tied, *Zach.* 4. 10. hence it is called Lead, Metonymically, because a Plummet of Lead is usually tied to a Cord, or lines end to keep it straight. We read of a double use of the Plummet in Scripture:

1 For Building, and Rearing.
2 For Ruining, and Demolishing.

1 The Plummet is used in building, to make the Work proportionable to the Model; thus Metaphorically God himself is said to work by Rule and Line, *Job* 38. 5. *Isa.* 44. 13. *Jer.* 31. 39. *Ezek.* 47. 3. *Zach.* 10. 16, 31, by this the Mason and the Carpenter try the rectitude of the Structure, and what upon trial he findes to be right and regular, that he preserves; and what is irregular and exorbitant, inclining either too much to the right hand, or to the left, that he pulls down.

2 The Plummet is used in levelling and demolishing. When the Mason layes the Line to the Work, and findes upon trial any place to swell and belch out, that he demolisheth and pulls down; thus when the Lord threatned to ruine *Edoms* Country, he tells us, *That he will stretch upon it the line of confusion; and the stone of emptiness*, Isa. 34. 11. that is, the Lord will measure it out for utter destruction, and perpetual ruine, so that it shall never be built, or be inhabited more. The like expression we find, *Isa.* 28. 17. *Lam.* 2. 8. and especially in the 2 *King.* 27. 13. where the Lord threatning to destroy *Jerusalem*, tells them, *That he will stretch over* Jerusalem *the Line of* Samaria, *and the Plummet of the house of* Ahab; that is,

is, I will deal with *Jerusalem* as I have dealt with *Samaria*, and with the house of *Manasseh* as with the house of *Ahab*; as I destroyed those for their sins, so will I destroy these. Thus the Lord stood upon the Wall with a Plumb-line in his hand, as ready to execute his just and righteous judgements upon *Israel*. This is an Embleme of Gods Mercy and Justice, who is the Master-builder of his Church.

1 It denotes his *Mercy*, in that he made this Church right and firme like a perpendicular wall, made exactly by Line and Rule, he had curiously built it, and as carefully defended it.

2 It is an Embleme of his *Justice*, he stands upon the wall of his Church, continually trying and examining whether it continue right or not, bearing with its defects, untill like a wall quite bending and belching out, it can no more be mended, or set upright as it was at the first, for then he resolves to throw down all, *Isa.* 30. 13.

Nitzzab, stans, ad indicandum firmam stantis resolutionem.

This wall (by some) is made a Type of all the people of *Israel*, whom the Lord of old had built for a peculiar people to himself. These resembled a wall. For,

1 *Walls* cannot raise themselves, but are built by some skilful Architect; so this people of *Israel* did not raise themselves, but God of his owne free love and grace chose them for his owne peculiar, and exalted them above all the Nations of the World.

2 *Walls* have foundations; and so had this people many gracious Promises to build upon, which the Lord made to *Abraham* and his Seed, which they contemning came to ruine.

3 An Architect builds the walls by Line and Rule; so God did all for this People with the greatest judgement and exactnesse imaginable. They had all of the best, the best Church, the best Sate, the best Lawes, the best Rulers, and the most successful Judges and Kings. The Lord himself was for walls and bulwarks to them, he was Salvation round about them, and their glory in the midst of them; so great was his care and tendernesse over them, *Isa.* 26. 1. & 60. 18. *Zach.* 2. 5. But since neither Mercies nor Judgements could mend them, the Lord resolves to forbear them no longer, but as he had built them up in mercy, so now he would ruine them in justice, and punish them exactly according to their demerits.

OB-

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Though the Lord bear long with the Sins of a People, yet he will not always bear.*

Though the Prayers of his People may keep off Judgements for a time, yet the Sins of a People may be so great, that the Lord will hear no more prayers for them, *Jer.* 15. 1. *Ezek.* 14. 16, 18, 20. and therefore the Prophet here seeing this People were incurable, and Gods determination fully set to destroy them for their Idolatry and Apostacy, he forbears any further interceding for them, quietly acquiescing in the righteous Judgements of God upon them. There is a time when the Lord will shew a People no more favour, *Jer.* 16. 13. an evil day, an only and extreme evil day, in which the Lord forbids Prayer, *Jer.* 7. 11, 14. and restraines a spirit of prayer, and relenting from his people, Ezek. 24. 23. *Dan.* 9. 13.

2 *Gods Judgements upon wicked men are just and righteous.*

They are all exactly framed as it were by line and measure, *Dan.* 5. 27. Justice is essential to God, he may as soon cease to be God, as cease to be just; hence he is called, *the righteous Judge*, Gen. 18. 25. and *the just Lord, who will doe no iniquity*, Zeph. 3. 5. he is just in and of himself, and just in his *Lawes*, just in his *Decrees*, just in the *execution* of those Decrees, just in the *Government of the World*, just in his Rewards, and just in his Judgements; he is not only righteous in some, but in all his wayes, *Psal.* 145. 17.

Doe not then fret or murmure at his Dispensations towards thee or thine, his Judgements may be secret, but they are alwayes just; whatever therefore God doth to thee or thine, yet say with *David*, *Righteous is the Lord, and just are his Judgements*, Psa. 119. 117. and with *Hezekiah*, when he was told that he must lose all, *Good is the Word of the Lord which thou hast spoken*, Isa. 39. 8.

We should then *imitate God*, as he is just and righteous in all his wayes, so should we be also in our degree; doing all exactly, according to the square and rule of Gods Word. As we must be merciful, as our heavenly Father is merciful; so we must be just, as he is just; though we cannot be so by way of Equality, yet by way of Analogy and Similitude we must be so.

so. Let us be just in our rewards, just in our punishments, just in our weights, words, and works, &c. that so God may delight in us; for the righteous Lord loveth righteousnesse, *Psalm* 11. 7.

Verse 8.

And the Lord said unto me, Amos *what seest thou? and I said, a Plumb-line, Then said the Lord, behold I will set a Plumb-line in the midst of my people* Israel, *I will not again pass by them any more.*

THe Lord comes now to threaten not a punishment, (as formerly) but a total destruction of this impenitent People; and therefore this Vision is not barely propounded, but by a Dialogue is so clearly expounded, that he who runs may read it. The better to quicken both Prophet and People to attention, the Lord begins with a question, *Amos what seest thou?* The Prophet could more easily discerne the meaning of the two former Visions, *viz.* that of the Locusts, and of the Fire; but God standing upon a wall with a Plumb-line in his hand, was harder to understand, and therefore the Lord goes on to explaine it to the Prophet.

I will set a Plumb-line in the midst of my people Israel; that is, I will now actually execute my Justice on them, which I have hitherto suspended in passing by their misdeeds; as I have formerly built them up by Line and Level, so will I now make an utter destruction of them, and will lay them in the dust. I have examined their works and wayes by the Rule and square of my Word, and I finde them so exceeding irregular, that I can no longer forbear them, *neither will I passe by them, or pardon them any more.* This latter clause is exegetical, and expounds the former; I have spared them twice already, but now I will make a final end with them; I will spend no more admonitions or corrections in vaine upon them, but I will deal with them as men use to doe with ruinous houses, whose breaches grow wider and worse every day than other, they pull them down, and lay them in the dust.

Lo osiph gnod gnabor lo, non adjiciam ultra præterire eum.

I will not again passe by them any more.

That is, I will shew them no more mercy, I will pardon them no longer; I have long winkt at their Sins, and let them goe unpunisht; but I will doe so no longer, I will surely and severely punish them for all together, as it follows in the next verse. The like expression we have, *Amos* 8. 2. & *Prov.* 19. 11. *It is the glory of a man to passe by an offence*; that is, to spare a man that hath offended, and not to punish him, or take revenge on him. So *Micah* 7. 18.

See *Amos* 8. 2.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Our rising and our ruining comes from God.*

He builds us by Rule, and if we swerve from the Rule, he will set up the Plumb-line and ruine us by Rule. All our times both of rising and falling are in Gods hands, *Psal.* 31. 15. our adversity and prosperity is not casual, but providential. As the Lord gives, so it is he that takes too, *Job* 1. 21. it is he that sent the Locusts and the Fire, and now the Plumb-line of utter destruction upon this people.

2 *Gods judgements usually are gradual.*

As mens sins are gradual, and rise to their *maximum quod sic*, to the highest ascent by degrees, so doe Gods Judgements. The judgement of the Locusts was sad, that of Fire was worse, but now comes the fatal Plumb-line and ends them. God doth not presently punish men so soon as ever they sin, but his patience waits, and allots men space to repent, *Rom.* 2. 4, 5. & *Revel.* 2. 21. which they abusing, God at last reckons with Sinners for all together; as we see in the *Amorites*, the old World, *Sodom*, and *Jerusalem*.

VERSE 9.

And the high places of Isaac *shall be desolate, and the Sanctuaries of* Israel *shall be laid waste; and I will rise against the house of* Jeroboam *with the sword.*

WEE have in this Verse a fuller explication of the Vision of the Plumb-line, and what it typified, *viz.* a total

a total subversion both of the Ecclesiastical and Civil state of *Israel*.

They were wont to boast much of their fore-fathers: when our Saviour talked with the Woman of *Samaria*, she presently tells him, *Our Fathers worshipt in this Mountain*, John 4. 20. so here, our fore-fathers worshipt in *Bethel*, *Beersheba*, *Gilgal*, *&c.* and therefore they conclude that they must needs please God by following their examples. Thus they flattered themselves as the Papists doe at this day, preferring the fallible Fathers before the infallible Word of God. But the Prophet plainly tells them, that *the high places of Isaac* (where they committed their Idolatry) *should be desolate*. By *Isaac* here is meant the house of *Israel*, who were descended from *Isaac* and *Jacob*. So *Vers.* 16. the Septuagint, the *Syriac*, and the *Arabick* Versions, make the word *Isaac* an Appellation, and not a proper name, they render it, Laughter, or Joy; the High places of Laughter, or the ridiculous High places, and the Altars of Derision (for what is more ridiculous than for men to worship a Stock, or a Stone which themselves have carved?) shall be desolate. But this is a ridiculous version of this text; for though there be a change of one Letter in the name of *Isaac*, *Scin* instead of *Tsade*, yet the Learned in that Language observe, that these Letters are used promiscuously, the one for the other, and it is the same *Isaac* here spoken of, which is mentioned, *Gen.* 17. 19. & *Psal.* 105. 9.

Arae risûs, vel fana ridicula.

Bamot Isaac, i.e. excelsa Isaaci, it is not *excelsa Idoli*, as the Vulg.

By high places here, are meant Temples and Altars, erected on Mountains and Hills for the honour of their Idols, *Amos* 4. *ult.* Though God had confined them by a strict command to worship at *Jerusalem*, yet they must have somewhat of their owne inventing, they must be sacrificing on their owne high Hills, high Altars, and high Places, though they dye for it.

What these High places were, see Mr. *Greenhil* on Ezek. 6. 3. p. 45.

These are called the High-places of *Isaac*, say some;

1 Because as *Abraham* was ready to offer *Isaac* in Sacrifice at Gods command; so these offered their Sons and Daughters (in imitation of *Abraham*) to *Moloch*, and *Baal*, but there is no ground for this in the text.

2 They garnisht their Idolatry with the names and examples of *Isaac* and *Jacob*, because in their times they had set up secret Altars, and offered Sacrifices there to the God of

Heaven. Thus did *Isaac* at *Beersheba*, Gen. 26. 25. and *Jacob* at *Bethel*, Gen. 35. 7.

And the Sanctuaries of Israel *shall be laid waste.*

That is, the Idolatrous Temples, Altars, and Groves in *Dan* and *Bethel*, and other Cities, consecrated to the golden Calves shall be destroyed by the *Assyrian.*

Micdeshe, sanctuaria.

These places are called *Sanctuaries*, and Holy places (not that they are so indeed) but the Scripture speaks according to mens opinions of them, as here it calls these Idols Temples, Sanctuaries, when indeed they were dens of Devils, and great provocations of Gods wrath against this people.

And I will rise against the house of Jeroboam *with the Sword.*

This *Jeroboam* was not *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebat* which made *Israel* to sin, the first Author of Schism and Idolatry in the Kingdome of *Israel*; but this is *Jeroboam* the second, one of the same name, and of the same religion, a chip of the old block, he was Son to *Joash*, Nephew to *Jehu*, and Father to *Zachariah*; in his dayes the Kingdom flourisht, they recovered many Cities, and inlarged their borders, but they abusing these Mercies, God threatens to destroy both the Kingdome and the Kings posterity; as he did when *Zachariah* the Son of *Jeroboam* was slaine openly in the sight of the people, by *Shallum* (after he had reigned six moneths) who translated the Kingdome to his owne family, 2 *King*. 15. 10. and this put an end to *Jehu's* Stock, according to the threatning, 2 *King*. 10. 30. Two vaine props this People rested on. 1. In their external, Idolatrous services, 2. In the power of their Kings. Both these the Lord tells them should faile them; for their Sanctuaries should be laid waste, and the house of the King cut off, and this made way for their utter ruine by the *Assyrian.*

Q. *But why doth the Lord threaten the house of* Jeroboam *rather than any other family?*

A. Because the Leaders of People (especially if they be wicked) lead them into Sin with them[illegible]ves, and so have the Peoples sins to answer for, as well as [illegible]owne. The twenty

Kings

Kings of *Israel* were all of them Idolaters, and drew the people into Idolatry with them, and therefore the Lord threatens to begin with the house of *Jeroboam* first; both Princes, Priests, and People had sinned together, and now the Lord tells them they shall perish together. So *Samuel* told the people, that if they persevered in their wickedness, both they and their King should perish, 1 *Sam.* 12. *ult.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Corruptions in the Church usually ruine the State.*

For Church and Common-wealth are like the Vine and the Elme, or like those twins which are said to weep and laugh together; so long as purity in religion is preserved, the State prospers, and hath peace, 2 *Chron.* 17. 5, 10. *Isa.* 60. 12, 13, 18. God will preserve that people which preserves his truth, *Revel.* 2. 10. but he will depart from those that depart from the purity of his wayes; and when God departs, peace, plenty, comfort, glory, &c. all goes with him, and all misery comes in like a floud, *Deut.* 31. 17. *Jer.* 6. 8. *Hos.* 9. 12.

2 *God will destroy Idolatrous places.*

The Sanctuaries and high places of Idolators shall be ruined; if Magistrates will not destroy them, God will, *Levit.* 26. 30. *Deut.* 12. 23. *Ezek.* 6. 3. *Amos* 4. *ult.* & 5. 5

See more in Mr. *Greenhil*, Ezek. 6. 3. Obs. 2.

3 *Sin, (especially the Sin of Idolatry) ruines great men as well as others.*

God is no respecter of persons, but if great men be great offenders, they must look for great punishment. God is terrible not only to inferiour wicked men, but even to the Kings of the earth; if *Jeroboam* will worship golden Calves, those Calves shall be his ruine. Idolatry is a God-provoking, and a Land-destroying sin, *Psal.* 106. 29 *Amos* 2. 4, 5.

4 *Gods Ministers must denounce Judgements against great men when they sin, as well as against inferiour persons.*

Magnum hoc est zeli Prophetici argumentum, quod Jeroboam regem, potentiâ regni & victoriis illustrem, Amos disserte nominat. Gualter.

Yea, rather against them, because by their example they doe more hurt. This makes *Amos* as it were threaten the house of the King. Thus *Elijah* reproves *Ahab*, *Nathan*, *David*, and *John Baptist Herod.* [See more in my Com. on *Psal.* 82. 2. Obs. 1. p. 96, 97.

5 *God transferres Kingdoms from one family to another, as pleaseth him.*

He

He puſſs down one and ſets up another in the Throne, and none may ſay to him, what doſt thou? After the diviſion of the Kingdom of *Iſrael* from *Judah*, they had twenty Kings of ten ſeveral Stocks, whereof one deſtroyed another. *Jeroboams* Stock was cut off by *Baaſha*, and *Baaſhaes* by *Zimri*, and *Tibni* by *Omri*, and *Omries* by *Jehu*, and *Jehu's* by *Shallum*, and *Shallum's* by *Menahems*, and *Menahems* by *Pekah*, and *Pekah's* by *Hoſhea*. All theſe Kings were Idolaters, and the moſt of them cruel Tyrants, and Perſecutors; and therefore God cut them off, that they did not live out half their dayes.

VER. 10, 11.

Then Amaziah *the Prieſt of* Bethel, *ſent to* Jeroboam *King of* Iſrael, *ſaying*, Amos *hath conſpired againſt thee in the midſt of the houſe of* Iſrael, *the Land is not able to bear all his words.*

For thus Amos *ſaith*, Jeroboam *ſhall dye by the Sword, and* Iſrael *ſhall ſurely be led away Captive out of their owne Land.*

WEE have ſeen *Amos* his fidelity and love to this People, in the faithful diſcharge of his duty to them. We are now come to the iſſue and event of his Sermons, and to ſee how he is requited for his pains, and this makes the ſecond part of this Chapter, where we have a notable Hiſtory of the Perſecution and *treachery* of *Amaziah* the Idolatrous Prieſt of *Bethel*; and the *conſtancy* of *Amos* in aſſerting the truth, maugre the malice of all adverſe power whatſoever.

This prophane Prieſt being netled with the plaine and powerful preaching of *Amos* at *Bethel*, fearing leſt the people ſhould ſee the truth, and be wrought upon by *Amos* his Sermons to caſt away their Idols, and return to the Worſhip of God at *Jeruſalem*, and ſo his gaines which he had by the Sacrifices and Oblations at *Bethel* might be loſt; yea if *Amos* and his Party ſhould prevail, he might fear not only the loſs of his Prieſthood and authority, but the loſs of his life alſo, as a falſe Prophet; he therefore reſolves to doe all he can, both by

by force and fraud to rid the Land of this turbulent and seditious *Amos*. The Urchin (we say) hath but one shift, but the Fox hath many; and so hath *Amaziah* here.

1 He gets on the *Lions skin*, and accuseth *Amos* to the King for a trayterous Conspirator against him, and a seditious Disturber of the peace of the Kingdome. Thus he pretends great kindnesse to the King, and tells him the cause was his, when in truth self was in the bottom of the design; for he knew if *Amos* prevailed, he should lose his fat morsels at *Bethel*, both he and his Idols might starve together; *Jerusalem* would have all the custom from him.

2 Since this way did not take, he now gets on the *Foxes skin*, and as a seeming friend, counsels him to leave the Kingdome of *Israel*, and goe to *Judea*, his owne Country, and Prophecy there, where he might avoyd the Kings fury. q. d. *It is not safe for thee, O* Amos, *to Prophecy here against the King and Kingdome, but goe to* Judea, *and tell them of the downfall of* Israel, *there thou wilt be safe and welcome; but this is* Bethel, *and it is no discretion for thee to preach against the King and Kingdome here.*

To this Charge and crafty counsel of *Amaziah*, *Amos* piously, prudently, and peaceably answers, with much courage and constancy, *Vers.* 14, 15. proving his extraordinary call to the work, denouncing Gods Judgements against *Amaziah*, and *Israel*, vers. 16, 17.

In this Verse we have an Accusation, or Charge drawn up against *Amos*, where we have, 1. The *Party accusing*, and that is *Amaziah* the Idolatrous Priest of *Bethel*, so called to distinguish him from *Amaziah* King of *Judah*, 2 King. 12. ult. he was Successor to those Idolatrous Priests which *Jeroboam* had set up at *Bethel*; some great man he was at Court in all probability, and neer to the King, which made him send so boldly to him, to incense him against *Amos*; the Jesuit calls him the High Priest of the Idols at *Bethel*, there *Jeroboam* had placed a Colledge of Priests, 1 *King* 12. 33. *Amaziah* might be the Præfect, or Governour of it.

Amazias fuit Pontifex Idolorum, i.e. vitulorum aureorum in Bethel. à Lapide.

The word *Choheu*, is used promiscuously for a Priest or a *Fuit illius loci præfectus regius.* Tarnovius. *Cum sacerdotem nominat, non vulgarem neq; infimum videtur intelligere, sed inter alios insignem, velut sacrificulorum Bethel principem.* Pareus.

Prince,

Prince, for an Ecclesiastical or a Civil Governor. In those days (except it were in *Judea*) many persons were both Priests and Princes, and ruled in Church and State. Hence the word is used for a Counsellor of State, or a great man, *Job* 12. 19. for a Priest, *Levit.* 1. 12. and for Idolatrous Priests, as here, and *Gen.* 41. 45. & 47. 22.

See Mr. *Caryl* On Job 12. 19.

2 Here is the *Party accused*, and that is *Amos*, a poor, plaine, pious, harmless Prophet.

3 Here is the Person *to whom he is accused*, and that is *the King*, Amaziah *sent to the King*, he could not well suppresse him himself, and therefore he sends to the Secular Power for ayd, desiring he may be either silenced, or banisht, or put to death.

4 Here is the *Matter* for which he is accused, *viz.* for Sedition, Rebellion, Conspiracy, and Treason; this he speaks to exasperate the King against him: the good Prophet did only discharge his duty faithfully, and perform that office which God had called him to, yet this is called *Sedition*, and conspiracy.

5 He aggravates the Crime from the *Place* where all this treason was acted, and that was not privily in a corner, or in another Kingdom, but openly in thy Kingdom, and *in the midst of thy people Israel*, even at *Bethel*, where was the Court and greatest confluence of all the subjects; so that thou hadst best look to it, O King, for intestine commotions are very dangerous.

6 Here is the Peoples ill resentment of all this, *The Land is not able to bear all his words. Amos* signifies a grievous burden, and he had not his name for nought, for he came loaded with many sad burdens and comminations against *Israel*, which made this stubborn people so unable to bear his words, *q. d.* Such a seditious, dangerous fellow is this New-found *Amos*, that if thou, O King, doe not suppress him, the people will; for *the Land*, that is, the people of the Land cannot brook, nor bear his blunt and down-right preaching, for they hate him that reproves them in the Gate, and abhor him that speaks uprightly, *Amos* 5. 10. Thus they complaine of *Amos* (without a cause) for conspiring against the King, when themselves conspired and combined together against the King of Kings without controul.

The

The Land cannot bear his words, much less can I, or any one that is devoted to the service of the King. His Prophesies are intolerable, for he disheartens the people by making them despair of their owne safety, so that he is no longer to be endured, O King, by thee, or thine, for the Land will never bee quiet till it be rid of him, either by banishment or death; there will be nothing but tumults and factions so long as he is tolerated to seduce the people.

Thus we see how this malicious false Prophet layes on load, thinking that somewhat would stick; every word hath its weight, *Quot verba, tot verbera*, so many words, so many daggers to stab this good Prophet. Had the charge been true, as it was notoriously false, *Amos* had been a man of death indeed.

To clear up all, let us look into the Charge more exactly.

Then Amaziah *Priest of* Bethel, *sent to* Jeroboam *King of* Israel.

Then, when the Prophet had made known to the people the Visions of God, concerning the ruine of the Kings house, and of the Kingdome, then *Amaziah* the Priest can hold no longer, but he must persecute and prosecute the Prophet. Thus persecution ever attends the faithful dispensing of the truth; flattery (we say) findes friends, but truth hatred.

Carnalibus verbum Dei sine cruce non potest nuntiari, comes veritatis crux. Mercer.

He sent to King Jeroboam; that is, he sent Letters or Messengers to the King, to incense him against *Amos*, and that clancularly and unknown to *Amos*, that so he might be condemned, unheard. No doubt but this High Priest had his Spies and Intelligencers about him, to observe what *Amos* preached, and now having got matter enough (as he conceived) against him, to root him out, he spit his poyson, saying, *Amos hath conspired against thee.*

The word which we render to conspire, properly signifies to bind, or to be compactly bound together in a body; but Metaphorically it signifies to conspire, to rebel, to conjure and band together against one, so the word is used, 1 *Sam.* 22. 8, 13. 1 *King.* 15. 27. & 16. 9. & 2 *King.* 10. 9. & 21. 23. so that this conspiring implies that *Amos* had some confederates with him, that helped to carry on this conspiracy against the King; when alas, *Amos* was so farre from *conspiring*, that he was now considering how he might prevent the ruine both of

Kasar, ligavit, colligavit, & per Metaphoram, conspiravit, conjuravit, rebellavit.

King and Kingdom, and avert the approaching judgements. By his Prayers he had prevented two judgements, and now counsels them to prevent the third; yet *Amos* is a Conspirator and troubler of *Israel*, when it was their owne Idolatry and Apostacy, and not *Amos*, that troubled them.

2 *Amos* did not vent his Passion, or speak his owne private opinion; but he tells them the mind and Message of God which he had shewed him in a Vision, and commanded him, to publish, touching the destruction (not of the King himself, for we read not that *Jeroboam* dyed by the sword) but of the Kings Posterity, vers. 9. *I will rise against the house of* Jeroboam *with the sword.* But *Amaziah* conceiving that the King would be more inraged against *Amos* for Prophecying against him, than for Prophecying against his Children, thereupon forges this accusation, and saith, *Amos* hath conspired against thee, and hath said, the King shall dye by the Sword. Not a word of truth, for *Amos* did not conspire against the King, neither did he say that he should dye by the Sword, yet this hath been the lot of all Gods faithful Ministers, to bee counted Seditious, and the troublers of a State, solely for discharging the duty of their places faithfully.

Amos non in Regem, sed in Amazia mendacia, & abominationes rebellavit. Merser.

Now by this high Charge we may see, that this false Prophet sought the life of the true one, as will appear if we frame his Accusation into an Argument, thus,

He that hath conspired the ruine both of King and Kingdom ought to dye; But *Amos* hath done so. *Ergo.* But it pleased the Lord (in whose hand is the heart of the King) to make the King so farre to favour the Prophet, as that hee sleighted this Priests accusation, and therefore *Amaziah* pretends friendship to ths Prophet, as we shall see hereafter.

Now let us view the Transactions of this High-Priest, and we shall finde a compleat Character of a false Prophet, or the perfect picture of a Polititian.

A great man counselled B. *Latimer* when he came first to Court, that he should in no wise contradict the King, but let him have his sayings, follow him, go with him. *Latimer* Ser. 7. p. 83. b.

1 They use to flatter and delude great ones, making them to beleeve that none are their friends but such as say as they say, and doe whatever they would have them doe, and humour them in their sins; and that they are their foes that like *Amos* here, deal faithfully and plainly with them, and this is no small part of great mens misery, that they have few about them that dare, or will deal faithfully with them. They may use

use the Letany (in this sense) with that alteration which the poor Curate used, when he saw his Lord come into the Church, *O God the Father of Heaven have mercy upon us Right Honourable Sinners.* Their state (in this respect) is farre worse than that of inferiour persons, who are plainly and truly told of their sins, when these are soothed up to their destruction. See Mr. *Baxter*, Fools prosperity, p. 293, &c.

2 They calumniate and belye the true Prophets, they observe *Machiavels* rule, *Calumniare audacter, faltem aliquid adhærebit*, Lye lustily, somewhat will stick though it be never so false. So it was with *Amos* here.

3 They labour with might and maine to suppress and silence the true Prophets, they know that their Kingdom cannot long stand, if once the faithful Ministers of Christ bee countenanced, Light and Darkness, the Ark and Dagon, Christ and Belial can never subsist together. This made *Amaziah* here to use both force and fraud to rid the Land of *Amos.* *Cogitant de se actum, si apud plebem sit locus veritati, coram veritate potentissima non potest stare mendacium, ne momento quidem.* Mercer in locum.

4 *They labour to suppresse good men before they can be heard.* They must not speak, nor dispute the case. Thus *Amaziah* here clancularly accuseth *Amos* to the King, when he could make no defence for himself.

5 *They usually mingle some truth with their lyes*; As Fowlers doe mixe some Wheat with their Chaff, to catch the Birds the sooner. So did *Amaziah* here, he mixed some truth with his lyes. *Amos* hath said, *Jeroboam* shall dye by the Sword, [that was false] and *Israel* shall surely goe into Captivity, [that was true.]

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *In all ages there have been false Prophets to oppose the true.* There was a *Jannes* and a *Jambres* to resist *Moses*, 2 Tim. 3. 8. and four hundred false Prophets against one good *Micaiah*; a *Pashur* and an *Hananiah* against the Prophet *Jeremy*; and here *Amaziah* against *Amos.* So in the New Testament, how bitter were the High Priests against Christ, *Joh.* 11. 47, 48. accusing him as an enemy to the State, and See more in my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 8. Obs. 1.

no friend to *Caſar*. How did the Scribes and Phariſees oppoſe the Apoſtles, and ſince Antichriſts Kingdom hath been ſet up, how have Gods faithful witneſſes been perſecuted and ſlaine? Perſecution hath ever been the lot, eſpecially of Gods zealous Meſſengers, *Acts* 7.51. let a man faithfully diſcharge the duties of his place, and *then* let him look for ſome Idolatrous *Amaziah* to oppoſe him. When we have opportunities of doing any good, we muſt look for many adverſaries, 1 *Cor.* 16.9. Let us not then be offended, when we meet with the like uſage from the world.

Ne offendamur, ſi hodie etiam ſummi; Pontifices, Cardinales, Epiſcopi, &c. Evangelicæ doctrinæ præ aliis reluctantur. Gualter.

2 *It is the property of Perſecutors to undermine Gods Servants clancularly.*

Amaziah ſends to the King privily, unknown to *Amos*, and accuſeth him for a Traytor, that ſo he might be condemned without hearing, or anſwering for himſelf. Thus they deal with *Jeremy*, when they could finde nothing juſtly againſt him, then they ſecretly deviſe devices againſt him, *Jer.* 11. 19. & 12. 6. & 18. 18. where we may obſerve the vile ingratitude of men; this Prophet had by his Prayers averted two Judgements from *Iſrael*, yet now they ſeek his death, who ſaved their life; and accuſe him of Rebellion, who ſaved them from deſtruction.

Valiant men charge their adverſaries in the face, it is for Cowards to creep behind. Truth ſeeks no ſhifts nor corners, it loves the light, as true gold fears neither the Touch-ſtone, nor the ballance; but falſhood being a work of darkneſſe, loves darkneſſe, and is not able to ſtand bare-faced before truth; and therefore it makes lyes and falſhood its refuge.

3 *Wicked men what ever they pretend, yet intend Self.*

Haman pretended the Kings profit, when his owne ambition, envie, and revenge was that he really ſought, *Heſt.* 3. 8. So this Idolatrous Prieſt here pretended great love and ſervice to the King, when *Self* was in the bottom of the deſign. He was the Prieſt of *Bethel*, and got much profit by the place, and therefore he hated *Amos* heartily, who forbad the people to come

Curavit Amazias proprium commodum, ſicut hodie videmus Cardinales & cornutos Epiſcopos, qui Principum aulas occupant, non preferre quod habent in animo; vident enim non poſſe ſtare ſuam tyrannidem niſi abolcatur Evangelium. Vident doctrinam noſtram minari frigus, vel potius glaciem ſuis colonis, deinde vident ſe nullos fore in mundo niſi nos oppreſſerint. Calvin in locum.

come any more at *Bethel*, but to shun it as a place infected with Superstition and Idolatry, *Amos* 5. 5. and so all the fat of this self-seeking Priest of *Bethel* ran into the fire. This he could not bear, for it struck at his dignity and livelihood. Such men make their bellies their gods, and little regard what becomes of truth, *modo hic sit bene*, (as the Monk said) when he stroked his fat paunch. Wee read of low and ordinary Priests that were obedient to the faith, *Acts* 6. 7. when the High-ones were enemies to the Gospel. The Apostle complaines that all men seek their owne ease, profit, praise, but few or none seek the things of Jesus Christ, *Phil.* 2. 21. How many plead for the Papacy and Prelacy for their bellies sake, rather than out of conviction, or in good earnest.

See an acute Ser. of Mr. *Edw. Symonds*, on Phil. 2. 21. printed 1642.

4 *It is an old trick of Satan and his agents, falsly to accuse the servants of God of Sedition, Treason, and Rebellion.*

Amos that was the glory and Saviour of *Israel*, that by his Prayers kept off many Judgements from them, yet now is called, the Troubler of *Israel*, and commanded to pack out of the Land, which he not hasting to doe, he was knockt in the head with a Club by *Amaziahs* Son, as *Epiphanius*, *Jerom* and others affirm. Thus *Elijah*, who was called, the Chariots and Horsemen of *Israel*, is called by wicked *Ahab* the Troubler of *Israel*, 1 King. 18. 17, 18. *Haman* accused the *Jewes* for a People that kept not the Kings Lawes, and that it was not for his profit to suffer them to live in the Land, *Hest.* 3. 8. Thus *Jeremy* that wept in secret for the sins of the Land, and by his Prayers did keep off many Judgements, yet is called a man of contention, and one that weakned the hearts and hands of the People, and that sided with the *Chaldeans* against his owne Country-men, *Jer.* 15. 10. & 37. 13, 14, 15, 18. & 38. 4. *Moses* one of the meekest men in the world, yet is accused of ambition, and one that takes too much upon him, *Numb.* 16.

See *Burroughs* Moses Choyce, cha. 1. p. 17. *Solenne est ut Christianis crimina Seditionis, & læsæ Majestatis à persecutoribus affingantur, quibus tamen non sint obnoxii. Centur. Magdeb.* 2 *Col.* 420.

Yea Christ himself was called and counted an enemy to *Cæsar*, a Fanatick, a Mad-man, and one that had a Devil. The *Apostles* were counted troublers of the Land, and the Pests of the places where they came, walking contrary to the Decrees

Obtendunt nostram Doctrinam non posse recipi quin totus orbis mutetur, quia totus ordo politicus pereat, quin reges spolientur suâ potestatis, consiliant sibi favorem obliquis artibus. Calvin in locum.

of *Cæsar*, and setting the world on a flame, *Acts* 16. 20, 21. & 17. 6, 7. So *Paul* was counted a pestilent incendiary, *Acts* 21. 28, 30, 31. & 24. 5. and B. *Latimer* in his Sermons often tells us, that when his enemies could finde no just exceptions against his matter, yet they would accuse him for a Sedirious and turbulent fellow. Truly (saith he) the Preaching of Gods Word is the cause of Sedition and Rebellion, as *Tenterton*-Steeple was the cause that *Sandwich-Haven* was stopt up with *Goodwins* Sands.

See *Latimers* ser. p. 43. *b.* p. 71. *b.* p. 106. *b.* *Edit. ult.*

The Devil began his Kingdom with a Lye, and by Lyes he still upholds it; he was a Lyar and a Murderer from the beginning, but first a Lyar, and then a Murderer; he cannot handsomely murder untill he slander first; hee must put a Bear-skin upon our backs before he can wel bait us. So they did in the *Primitive times*, and if any calamity befel the Land, they presently cried, *Away with the Christians to the Lions*, as if they had been the cause of it; whereas the world was full of miseries before they were born, and will be when they are dead and gone. The Pagans in those times gave out, that the Christians did worship an Asses Head, used promiscuous Lusts, and drunk the blood of Infants, &c. These and many more Slanders they invented, mearly to make them odious, that they might murder them the better. As a man that will hang his Neighbours Dogge, must first give out that he is mad. This made so many Learned men to Apologize for the Christians, and to wipe off those calumnies which malice had cast upon them. Thus did *Justin Martyr*, *Apolog. ad Sanct. Romanum*, p. 41. *edit. Graecolat.* & 2 *Apolog. ad Anton. Pium*, p. 53. *Tertullian Apologet.* *Minutius Felix*, p. 102. 116, &c. *Origen Lib.* 3. *contra Celsum*, *Tom.* 3. p. 681. *Cyprian contra Demetrianum*, p. 163. *Arnobius lib.* 1. *adversus gentes.* *August de Civit. Dei per totum.* He writ those twenty two Books to clear the Christian Religion from vile aspersions.

Si Tiberis non ascendit ad mænia, Si Nilus non ascendit in arva, statim Christianos ad leones. Tertul. Apolog. c. 40. *Aug. de Civit. Dei. l.* 2. *c.* 3.

See Mr. *Bolton*, Comfort afflict. Consciences, Part. 1. ch. 2. Sect. 2. p. 155, 156. & D. *Sanderson* his second Ser. *Ad clerum*, p. 56, &c.

The wicked like *Athaliah* cry Treason, Treason, when shee her self was the Traytor. The wicked complaine of the godly for troubling *Israel*, when it is themselves that are the true Reshagnims and troublers both of Church and State. As they have no peace in themselves, so they hinder it in others. It is the covetous *Achan*, the Idolater, *Judg.* 5. 8. the Swearer, *Jer.* 23. 10. the Sabbath-prophaner, *Ezek.* 20. 13. the Covenant-breaker,

nant-breaker, *Levit.* 26. 23. the debaucht Drunkard, the unclean *Zimri* and *Cozbi*, these, these are they that trouble *Israel*.

Touching the turbulency of *Jesuits* and Mass-priests, and what Incendiaries they are, and touching their seditious Doctrine, leading to disobedience and rebellion, what a Catalogue of about forty Kings and Princes destroyed, or vexed by the Pope and his Clergy, see this clearly proved by Mr. *John White*, in his Way to the true Church, chap. 6 p. 25. and Mr. *Baxter*, his Key to Catholicks, chap. 48. p. 348. & 356. See *Watsons* Quodlibets, p. 69, &c. 75, &c. 112, &c. Dr. *Abbot* Antilogia, p. 1. p. 36. p. 115. they teach King-killing, *Bolton* Comfort Afflict. *Consc.* Preface, p. 3, 4, 5. D. *Morton*, *De potest. Regia*, S. 3. and Mr. *Pryn*, The Treachery and Disloyalty of Papists to their Soveraigns, printed 1643. and *Romes* Master-peece. Yet to come nearer our times, what notorious slanders and lyes have the Papists raised against our Reformers? to instance but in three:

King *James* calls them the Devils Brood, *ubi cunq; Jesuita, ibi est revelum proditor, scelerum machinator.*

Luther,
Calvin,
Beza.

1 *Luther* was loaded with Papistical Lyes, he was accustomed to them, saying, *Mihi maxime prosunt, qui de me pessime loquuntur, Lutherus pascitur conviciis.* They gave out, that going merry to bed and drunk, he was found next morning dead in his bed, &c. when *Luther* was alive, and testified the falshood of this Fiction under his owne hand. The like they did by *Calvin*, and *Beza*.

See *Whites* way to the true Church. Dialog. 54. p. 429, &c. and Mr. *Clark* in the life of *Luther*.

2 *Calvin*, they were not behind hand with him, they accused him of Ambition, Covetousness, Incontinency, &c. that he was a branded *Sodomite*, consumed of Lice, and dyed blaspheming, all which calumnies are set off by the Writers of his life. His enemies finde it farre more easie to calumniate him, than to imitate him. Most of our Modern Writers doe but descant upon *Calvins* Plain-song; yea the Jesuits themselves are very Plagiaries, who doe first rob him, and then rail at him.

See *Rivet.* Catholi. Orthodox. Q. 1. p. 12, 13, 14, &c. and Mr. *Baxters* Key to Catholicks, chap. 31. p. 189, &c.

3 *Beza*, They gave out that he was dead, and had recanted, and turned Papist, when he was alive, and did confute the slander.

It

It were easie to tire the Reader with such instances, but these may suffice.

This may serve,

1 For Comfort.
2 For Caution.

To comfort us against Slanders. See my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 3. p. 88. See *Watsons* Charter, ch. 15.

1 For *Comfort*, if the like befall us, remember the Disciple is not above his Master, nor the Servant above his Lord. Let us be patient till the coming of the Lord, for then there will be a Resurrection of Names, as well as of Bodies, and Christ himself will be our Compurgator.

2 For Caution, It must make us wary and cautious what reports we receive against the godly; and not to beleeve every Idolatrous bloud-thirsty *Amaziah*, when they revile and calumniate Gods faithful Ministers and People; if bare accusations were sufficient to condemn men, Christ himself had not been innocent.

As for the godly, they are of those who are peaceable in *Israel*, they are endued with the wisdome which is from above, which is first *Pure*, and then *Peaceable*, Jam. 3. 17. they are peaceable in themselves, and are Peace-makers, and Peace-preservers; they are for Peace Ecclesiastical, Political, Domestical; they are for all manner of Peace, save peace with sin. Peace and Piety, Peace and Truth is their hearts desire, *Zach.* 8. 19. *Heb.* 12. 14. the Gospel like a Sword divides between men and their sins, and so breaks worldly wicked peace, *Mat.* 10. 34, 35. but establisheth internal, real, solid peace; *I came not to send Peace, but a Sword*, Christ speaks not of the *effect*, but of the *event* of the Gospel; not what the Gospel procures properly *Et per se*, but Accidentally, when it meets with wicked mens corruptions; not what it works in the faithful, but in the unfaithful. The Gospel in it self brings that peace which passeth all understanding, to such as submit unto it, but wicked men opposing it make the tumult and division, and therefore it is they, and not the Gospel that must be blamed. Real godly men that walk up to their Principles and Priviledges, are the Blessings of a Land, the Pillars of a Nation, the Beauty and Bulwarks of the places where they live. They keep Islands from destruction, *Job* 22. *ult.* and therefore they cannot truly be called the destroyers of them.

Pax cum hominibus, sed cum vitiis cominus & eminus pugnandum est.

See *Caryl* on Job 9. 13. p. 244.

As

As *Sampsons* strength lay in his hair, so the Governours of the Nation shall say, that in the inhabitants of *Jerusalem* is our strength, *Zach.* 12. 5.

It is ignorance and prophaneness which makes a people rude and rebellious, but where Religion comes in the power of it, and men obey not for fear, but for conscience sake, there are no better Servants and Subjects in the world; none more faithful to their trusts, none pray more for their Governours, nor pay their dues more freely and fully to them. These are they that will venture their Lives and Estates for their honour, when such as serve them for their owne ends, will leave them and forsake them.

Yet lest any should think some singular take the testimony of one (that as the times goe) may passe for many. *Be tender over good men (saith Doctor* Gauden *) these are those that shall see Gods face in glory, and so are more fit to enjoy the favour of Kings on earth. These are they that best know the duty, honour, and fidelity they owe to Majesty, and make a conscience to pay it; because it is a point of holinesse so to do. These are the* Propugnacula & munimenta regni & Ecclesiæ *(as was said of St.* Ambrose) *the strength, honour, and security of Church and State under God, and his Majesties care and pious providence, these are in some sort the (*Tutelares genii*) Protectors of his Majesties Person, health, wealth, life, Queen, Crown, and Posterity; whilst they daily lift up pure hands, and holy hearts to the God of Heaven, for his Majesties safety and happinesse. These are like* Moses *and* Elias, *the Chariots and Horse-men of* Israel. *These have power with God, by their Prayers, counsel, and good examples they lye in the gap, and hinder the inundation of Sin and Judgement. To these we owe under God, the enjoyment of our peace, plenty, safety, and religion, and of the blessing of blessings temporal, a pious and gracious Prince.* Thus fully and truly the Doctor; so that it appears on all hands that Gods people are not the *Troublers*, but the Pillars and peaceable ones in *Israel*; this will yet further appear, if we consider these four things:

Doctor *Gauden* in a Sermon Preacht at Court, 1642. on Heb 12. 14. p. 35, &c.

1 Their Principles.
2 Their Titles.
3 Their Prayers.
4 Their Practices.

1. Sedition and conspiracy is against their *Principles*, they are taught to fear God first, and then to honour the King as his Vice-gerent on earth. They obey not for fear (as wicked men doe) but for conscience sake; as they give unto God what is Gods, so they give unto *Cæsar* what is *Cæsars*. *It is the want of good Preachers* (*saith Bishop* Latimer) *that is the cause of Rebellion*, if there were good Bishops (saith he) there would be no rebellion, it is ignorance that breeds rudeness and rebellion, as we have seen in the *Welch*, *Irish*, &c. Light and Grace take away that ferity, cruelty, and turbulency that is in our natures, it makes the Lion and the Lamb to dwell together in peace, *Isa.* 11. 6, 7, 8. Inordinate love of the World is the great make-bate of the World; now Grace loosens mens hearts from the world, & makes *Abraham* to part with his owne right to *Lot*, though he were superiour to him in age and place, yet he yeelds to him for peace sake, *Gen.* 13. 8, 9. and Christ himself lest he should give offence to others, paid tribute to *Cæsar*, though he could have pleaded immunity, *Mat.* 17. 27. Besides, their God is the God of peace, *Rom.* 15. 33. 2 *Thess.* 3. 16. Christ their Saviour is the Prince of peace, *Isa.* 9. 6. the Spirit that dwells in them is a Dove, the emblem of peace; the Gospel which they beleeve is the Gospel of peace; they are endued with the wisdome which is from above, which is pure, and peaceable; the peace of God rules in their hearts, and moderates their passions, *Col.* 3. 15. so that we need not fear their offending, who are so strictly bound against offending.

Bishop *Latimers* Ser. p. 114. b.

See more in Mr. *Burroughs* Gracious *Spi.* ch. 6. p. 137, &c. and his *Irenicum*, ch. 31, 32, 33. and the interest of *England* in three Queries, p. 41, & 48, &c.

2 The *Titles* which are given them in Scripture, shew that they are men of peace; *David's* Motto is theirs, *I am for peace*, Psal. 120. 7. hence they are called Doves, not Kites; Lambs, not Lions; Sheep, not Wolves; and the Church is compared to a Vine, not to a Thorn; to a Virgin, to a Widow, to a Worm, *Isa.* 41. 14. all which are harmless, innocent, inoffensive creatures; subject to wrong, but doe none, and this the Churches enemies know right well, which makes them so ready to abuse them. The Crow will pull wool off a Sheeps back, it dares not bee so bold with a Wolf, or a Fox.

3 It is against their *Prayers* to be turbulent, they pray for the peace of *Jerusalem*, and for the peace of the places where they

they dwell, *Jer.* 29. 7. whilst others are drinking Healths, and breaking the Kings Lawes by their debauchery, these are praying for Kings, and for all in authority under them, that by their means we may live in godliness and peace, yea so farre are they from creating troubles, that by their Prayers, counsel, and good example, they keep many troubles and disorders out of a Land.

4 It is against their *Practicus*. Their practice is to bless them that curse them; to pray for them that persecute them; to doe good to them that hate them, and to preserve their lives, who seek their deaths, as *Bradford* did by *Bourn*. If their enemy be hungry, they feed him; if naked, they cloath him, and so heap coals of fire upon his head, *Rom.* 12. 20.

Besides, in the places where they dwell, they labour to suppress Sin, and to promote Piety, and this conduceth very much to the peace and prosperity of a Nation. Where the salt of Grace is, there is peace, *Mark* 9. *ult.* It was Prophesied, that in Gospel-times they should not hurt in all Gods holy Mountain, and why so? *for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord*, and that will make men pious and peaceable, *Isa.* 11. 9. Ignorant men are brutish mercilesse men, the dark places of the earth are habitacions of cruelty, *None so bloody as blind Idolaters.*

See Mr. *Pryn* his Treatise of the Treachery and Disloyalty of Papists to their Soveraign printed 1643.

VERSE 11.

For thus saith Amos, Jeroboam *shall dye by the sword, and* Israel *shall surely be led away captive out of their owne Land.*

IN this Verse *Amaziah* the Priest labours to make good his Charge against *Amos*, to this end he produceth a double accusation against him.

1 He chargeth him as an enemy to the King, and that hee had conspired against him, saying, *Jeroboam shall dye by the sword*; this was a manifest untruth, for *Amos* never said, the King shall dye by the sword, but that *God would rise against the house of* Jeroboam *with the sword*, vers. 9. and so he did; for though we do not read that *Jeroboam* himself dyed by the sword, yet *Zachariah* his Son was slaine by *Shallum* in the sight of

the people, which put an end to the Stock of *Jehu*, according to what the Lord had threatned against the house of *Jehu*, viz. that in the fourth generation his Stock should cease; so that *Amaziah* reports *Amos* his Doctrine to the King, not fully, but fraudulently, applying that to the Father, which *Amos* spake against the Posterity. Thus wicked men, like their Father the Devil, adde and detract from Gods Word, and mens words, so as may best suit with their owne designes.

2 He chargeth him with disheartning the people, in saying, that *Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their owne Land.* This was true, but so farre from being a Crime, that it was *Amos* his glory, that he faithfully and freely delivered the Message that God commanded him to deliver to his people; and here we may observe, that when this false Prophet recites *Amos* his words to the King, there he alters the words, and makes things worse; but when he comes to speak of the people, then he can speak truth.

He had used all his Oratory to persuade the King to punish *Amos*, but *Jeroboam* knew that he was a Man of God, and therefore durst not doe his Prophet any harm; and the rather, because he had observed that God had sharply punished *Jeroboam* the first with a withered arme, and *Ahab*, and other his Predecessors that had opposed his Prophets; their harms made him wise. The context shewes that the King was cold in the cause, for we read of no answer that the King gave to *Amaziah*, peradventure he might discerne his falshood and his flattery, and so sleight him; this is very probable by that which follows in the next verse, where *Amaziah* falls to flattering *Amos*, since by force he could not hurt him.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *It is an old trick of the Devil and his agents, to wrest and mis-recite the words of Gods servants.*

When they can finde nothing justly against them, then they fall to belying them, and to devise devices against them. The Devil is termed *Diabolus*, he hath this name given him because he is a violent, and virulent *Calumniator*, and belyer of the Saints, and so are his followers, and therefore they

See more in my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 3.

they also are called (διάβολοι, *Calumniatores*) by their Fathers name, false-accusers. So *Joh* 1. 9. *Acts* 6. 11, 13. *Rom.* 3. 8.

2 *It is the property of false Prophets to mingle some truth with their lyes, the better to deceive the simple.*

So doth this Priest of *Bethel* here, and so doe Mass-Priests. As the Fowler mixeth some Wheat with his Chaff, and sticks some Corn upon his Lime-twiggs to catch the sooner: so Satan puts a fine gloss upon his false wares that they may sell the better. He and his can produce Scripture for a need, they can transforme themselves into Angels of Light, and can cite Scripture to draw you from Scripture, and tempt you to irreligion by religious Arguments mis-applied. *Epicurus* that was licentious in his Life, and lewd in his Opinions, holding that there were no Gods, or else that they were idle, and cared not for governing the World, yet sometimes he commends the pleasures of the mind, that so he might vend his Epicurean pleasures the better.

Epicurus aut Deos fingit otiosos, aut nullos, Minut. Felix, who lived in the third Century. *V. Ross* his Confut. of *Browns* vulgar errours, ch. 16. p. 255.

3 *That Princes usually are more indulgent to Gods Prophets than Idolatrous Priests.*

Amaziah the Priest would have *Amos* put to death for a Traytor, but the King spares him. It is observed, that the greatest hatred is usually amongst men of the same profession; it is not the King, but the Priest of *Bethel* that prosecutes *Amos*. Thus it was with *Jeremy*, when the Priests were inraged against him, and sought his life, then the Princes plead for him, and save him, *Jer.* 26. 8, 16. and after when the Princes cast him into the Dungeon, then the King released him, *Jer.* 38. 10. So our King *Edward* the Third preserved *Wickliffe* from the fury of *Simon Sudbury* Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*, and after the Duke of *Lancaster* became his great Patron against the persecuting Prelates of those times.

Figulus invidet figulo, & faber fabro.

ris, but must preach when and where his Lord and Master commands him.

4 *There eate bread*; that is, Get thy living there, *Gen.* 3. 19 for if thou stayest here thou mayest starve, here is no body will succour or support thee; for thou art a burden both to Prince and people. Here is nothing for thee to eate, here is no profit to be had, and by thy preaching so openly at *Bethel*, against the Calves of *Bethel*, thou marrest our markets too. But goe to *Judah*, there thou wilt be maintained like a Prophet indeed: there thou wilt live more securely, and be maintained more plentifully; there is King *Uzziah*, alias *Azariah*, that loves such precise ones as thou art, 2 *King.* 15. 1,3. and a people that prize men of thy straine, and will not suffer thee to want. Thus this mercenary false Prophet measures *Amos* by himself, thinking that gaine would intice him away, as if *Amos* had been one of those who Prophesied for a little Lucre, for a handful of Barley, or a mouthful of Bread, *Ezek.* 13. 19. *Micha* 3. 11. so that this is an Argument *ab utili*.

5 *Prophesie there.* Here this subtile Priest Prolepticelly prevents an Objection; whereas *Amos* might have said, what? would you have me idle, and leave that employment to which God so signally, and extraordinarily called me? Not so, (saith *Amaziah*) I doe not bid thee flee, that thou mayest be idle or silent (for if he had done so, his fraud had been too apparent) but I bid thee goe to *Judah*, and Prophesie there, where thou wilt have double honour; that is, both countenance and maintenance, both which thou wanteest here. Thou loveest to be plaine and free against sin, why get thee to *Judah*, there they will be glad of thee, and there thou mayest declaime freely against the sins of *Israel*, and threaten us without fear. Here thou art molested with Altars and Calves, with Idols and Images, *Amos* 3. 14. but get thee to *Jerusalem*, and there thou wilt be free from these superstitious foperies, and lying vanities. There exercise thy gifts of preaching, and get thy living by it, as I doe by my Priesthood at *Bethel*, where I live peaceably, and plentifully with my Oblations and Sacrifices; I shall not envie thee (get what thou canst at *Judah*) doe not thou envie me my Morsels at *Bethel*.

6 He argues *adamno*, and tells him that it was dangerous

rous for him to preach any more at *Bethel*, as for what is past that is pardoned, provided thou come no more amongst us at *Bethel*, for it is the Kings Court, and the Kings Chappel, and he will not endure to be affronted there.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *That wicked men are very sedulous in opposing the faithful Ministers of God.*

What industry and activity doth this Priest of *Bethel* use to root *Amos* out of *Israel*. He sends to the King, and accuseth *Amos* for a Traytor; and when force will not doe, he playes the Fox, and under presence of friendship perswades him to leave his station, and to flee the Land. So *Pharaoh*, how industrious was he to destroy *Israel*; how active was *Haman* to have the *Jewes* destroyed, and what a great sum doth he promise to the King to effect it, no less than ten thousand talents of silver, *Hest.* 4. 9. So *Nehemiahs* enemies, what force and fraud did they use to hinder his repairing of the Temple, how faine would they have had him flee; as *Amaziah* would have had *Amos* here, that so he might have reproached him for a Fugitive, and one that was conscious to himself of his own guilt, and therefore he fled for it.

Q. *The Question then will be, whether it be lawful to flee in time of persecution?*

A. In some Cases it may, as, 1 If a man be but a young beginner, and find not strength to bear the brunt and heat of the day, he may with-draw for a time.

2 If the Persecution be personal, against a particular man, or Minister, and not against the whole Church, he may use his liberty. So did *Moses*, *Elijah*, *David*, Christ, *Paul*.

But when Gods time is come, that he calls us to seal to his truth even with our dearest lives, we must not love them to the death, *Revel.* 12. 11. but rejoyce that we have any thing of worth to lay down for Christ; like the valiant Horse, we must goe forth to meet the armed man, *Job* 39. 21. so did that accomplisht, couragious Martyr, Mr. *Fryth*, when some that loved him had contrived his escape, *he told them it must not be; for* (saith he) *if you should leave me here and goe to* Croydon, *declaring to the Bishop that you had lost* Fryth, *I would surely*

See Mr. *Clarks* Lives, 1 Vol. in the Life of Mr. *Fryth.*

follow after as fast as I could, and bring them newes that I had found and brought Fryth *again.*

[See this Case more fully handled in Mr. *Perkins* C. Cons. lib. 2. ch. 11. Q. 3. and on *Heb.* 11. 35. p. 191. and D. *Geo. Abbot*, *Thesis* 5. p. 169. and in my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 11. Obs. 5. p. 202. Doct. *Tho. Taylor* on Self-denial, p. 23. *folio, in fine.*]

2 *Wicked men many times are subtile men.*

The Devil chuseth Serpents for his Instruments, *Cupit ab his ornari Diabolus*, he thinks it an ornament to his Cause and Kingdom to get wits about him, how subtilly here doth this Priest act his part; his words are smoother than oyl, and yet are they very swords, *Psal.* 55. 23. Satans Instruments (like their Father the Devil) can transform themselves into Angels of Light, 2 *Cor.* 11. 13, 14. when such speak fair, beleeve them not, for there are seven abominations in their hearts, *Prov.* 26. 25. we had need then to be wise as Serpents, and to watch not only against a raging, but against a fawning enemy; not only against the Lion Rampant, but also against the Lion Couchant. The worlds flatteries are more to be feared than its frowns, its courtesies, than its injuries. Many that have stood it out manfully against open hostility, yet have been insnared by flattery. Take heed of those *Joabs* and *Judasses* that kiss and kill, 2 *Sam.* 20. 9, 10. watch not only against open, but also against secret insinuating enemies, which under pretence of friendship seek thy ruine; the Devil gains thousands, and ten thousands this way. Wee should observe his depths, and not be ignorant of his methods and devices; but stop our ears against his Syrens, when they seek to undermine us.

Incautè credulii facilè circumveniuntur ab his, quos bonos putaverunt. Minut. Felix, p. 39.

See my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 17. Obs. 2. p. 269.

3 *That titles of honour may be given to Gods Ministers.*

O thou Seer, it is not, O thou Lyar, thou Viper, thou Wolf, thou Robber, thou Murderer, thou Conjurer, thou Juggler, Devil, &c. as those black blasphemous Devils the *Quakers* call us. *Amaziah* (though an Idolatrous Priest) yet had learnt better language than so.

4 *The Ministers of God should be Seers.*

They must not be blind Guides, nor Seers that can see nothing but what tends to their owne gain; nor Seers of Lyes and Vanities, (as it is said of false Prophets) *Ezek.* 13. 7, 8, 9, 32.

9, 23. & 22. 28. but they must be men of knowledge, *Mal.* 2. 7. and have the Tongue of the Learned, to speak a word in season to him that is weary. Look what the eye is to the body, that are (or at least-wise that should be) Pastors to the Church, to watch over the Flock for good, and to direct it in paths of Piety. Hence Ministers are called the Eye, 1 *Cor.* 12. 17. Stars, and the Light of the World, *Mat.* 5. 14. burning and shining Lights, *John* 5. 35. which help to inlighten the World with the light of sound Doctrin. Hence it is that the Prophets of old were so oft called *Seers*, *Sadoc*, was called a Seer, 2 *Sam.* 15. 27. and *Gad*, 2 *Sam.* 24. 11. and *Heman*, 1 *Chron.* 25. 5, *&c.*

Ver. 13.

But Prophesie not againe any more at Bethel, *for it is the Kings Chappel, and the Kings Court.*

WEE have seen this *Bethelian* Priests counsel, Thetically and Positively set down. *vers.* 12. In this verse we have his advice Antithetically set down, *But Prophesie no more at Bethel*, come not within my Diocess and Jurisdiction, where I and others are bound to attend, and officiate by the Kings *Mandamus*. In the words we have, 1 A Prohibition, *Prophesie no more at* Bethel, *q. d.* Thou hast preached six Sermons already against the State, the King hath pardoned thee for them all, and passed an Act of Oblivion, provided thou preach no more so; but if thou be like to new Wine, which must have vent (for silence is painful to a real Prophet) yet come not to *Bethel*, but rather goe to *Judah* thine owne Country, for I am resolved to suspend and silence thee from preaching here, and that for two Reason.

1 Because it is the Kings Sanctuary, and the Courtiers will not beleeve thee, nor abide thee.

Vide quibus argumentis pugnant, qui veritati adversantur, astutè quidem aliquot rationes, & interdum Scripturis agunt, sed maxima fiducia illis in regum ac principum authoritate reposita est. Gualter in locum.

2 The Kings Court is there, and they cannot have while to attend thee; it is in vain therefore for thee to abide in such a place, where thou canst have neither Credence, nor Audience.

We may adde a third Reason, which was the real ground of this High-Priests prohibition, and that was because *Amaziahs* gain lay there, *q. d.* Come not here with thy New-light, declaime not here against our Idolatry, lest thou marre our markets, and hinder the sale of our false-wares. This was the truth of the business, though somewhat else was pretended, and the King and Kingdoms interest pleaded.

Ibi urgente Prophetâ & dura fulminante vaticinia contra illum locum, spes nulla relinquebatur copiosi lucri. Sanctius. See *Amos* 4. 4.

Bethel was a City in the Kingdome of *Israel*, though properly it belonged to the Tribe of *Benjamin*; but *Jeroboam* the first setting up one of the golden Calves there, 1 *King.* 12. 29. turned this *Bethel* (which was sometimes the House of God) into *Beth-aven*, the house of vanity and iniquity; *Samaria* was the more populous place, but the Calves were in most request at *Bethel*, and therefore the Prophet testifies against the Idolatry of that place especially.

It is the Kings Chappel, or as the word most genuinely signifies, it is the Kings Sanctuary; *i. e.* it is a place consecrated by the Kings Predecessors for the worship of the Calves, to the which he bears a singular devotion, and where he often keeps his Royal residence, and doth celebrate his solemn Worship, and Divine Service. It is therefore dangerous for thee, O *Amos*, to preach against the Kings religion in the Kings Chappel, in the face of the Court, and the flower of the Land. To doe so in any part of the Land is not tolerable, but to preach thus at *Bethel* is most intolerable. *Jeroboam* the first set up a Calf at *Dan* as well as at *Bethel*; but this at *Bethel* was most frequented both by King and People. 1. Because it was nearer to *Samaria* than *Dan*, which was situate in the North part of the Land. 2. For its *Antiquity*, because it was the place where *Jacob* of old did Worship God. It was of greater Antiquity than the Temple at *Jerusalem*, yet for all these specious reasons they sinned in forsaking the Rule, and not Worshipping at *Jerusalem* as God had appointed. So that whereas this Priest cries out, this is *Bethel* the Kings Chappel, we say so too, yet that is no prejudice to Gods Prerogative.

Mikdash melech, Sactuarium vel Sacrarium regis. The word is alwaies used for a Sanctuary, Exo. 15. 17. & 25. 8. Isa. 8. 14. & 16. 12. Ezek. 5. 11.

Periculosum est scribere in eum, qui potest proscribere.

In Dei cultu non speciosæ rationes sequendæ, sed Dei verbum. Mercer.

It is the Kings Court, or, it is the Kings House, for his Palace was there. Though the Kings prime Palace was in *Samaria*, yet he had other Palaces in other places, as at *Jezreel* and *Bethel*, where he used to reside for a time, that he might be a Pattern of Worship to the people. Or, it is the House of the

the Kingdome (as it is in the Fountain) that is, the Royal Court, or the Soveraign Court of Judicature for the Kingdom is at *Bethel*, whither come a great confluence of people, and where Civil affairs, and matters of State are debated, and therefore it is not safe nor seemly for thy rude rusticity, which knowes no Royalty, to abide there. The King hath Chaplaines enough of his owne (that are compleat Courtiers) to preach before him; he needs no such rustical Prophets, and blunt Anti-Courtiers as thou art; he hath Natives enough, but thou art a Stranger, and comest from another Country: Hee hath Prelates and Priests of eminent parts, every way accompliht for the work; whereas thou art a poor obscure Prophet, that camest *ab hara, non ab ara*, from the Herds, not from the Schools, and so art altogether unfit for the Court. Wouldest thou but Prophesie smooth and pleasant things, thou mightest abide here still, but thou art so rough and rugged, so plain and down-right, that our Courtiers ears cannot abide thy words; so that there is no staying for thee here but with abundance of danger. Thus this grand Impostor would have frighted the true Prophet from his duty, that so hee might keep up the reputation of his Idolatrous Priests at *Bethel*, who for filthy Lucre, that they might rob the true Prophets of their Tythes and Offerings, did by their preaching foment both Rebellion in the State, and Schism in the Church, for the Sanctuary at *Bethel* robbed the Temple at *Jerusalem*.

Beth mamlachah, Domus regni.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Wicked men doe their utmost to silence faithful Ministers.*

They prohibit them Preaching, *Prophesie not*. The like complaint we have, *Amos* 2. 12. *Micha* 2. 6. they say to the Prophets, *Prophesie not*; they silence them that they may sin without controul, and goe to Hell without any hindrance. Thus the Rulers of the *Jewes* forbid *Peter* and *John* to preach any more in the name of Jesus, *Acts* 4. 17, 18. & 5. 40. what is this but to fight against God, and to countermand his commands? he bids his *Amoses* preach, the *Amaziahs* of the World say no. Did ever any man thus harden himself against God, and prosper? if he that with-holds Corn from the people, him shall the people curse, *Prov.* 11. 26. what a sad curse

will light upon those that with-hold Spiritual corn from them, and deprive them of their faithful Pastors which are the light of the World, the Guides, the Fathers, the Physitians, the Pillars of the Church; such as forbid men to Preach, please neither God nor man, 1 *Thes.* 2. 15, 16. *Herod* was a wicked man, yet this was his sinning sin, and is said to surmount all the rest, that he put *John* in Prison, *Luke* 3. 20. *he added this above all, that he shut up* John *in prison*; and see what befell *Amaziah* here for opposing *Amos*, ver. ult.

Obj. *But the Minister denounceth Judgements against us, which we cannot bear.*

A. Let him preach Mercies or Menaces, if God have sent him we may not silence him, but must thankfully receive Threatnings as well as Promises, Judgements as well as Mercies; they are both necessary for us.

Quid est prædicare, nisi furorem mundi in se derivare? Luther.

2 *The great ones of the world cannot brook plain Preachers.*

These Gallants look upon such blunt and bold *Amoses* as a pack of Fanaticks, a company of rude, indiscreet Persons, that dare venture to reprove such as them for their sins. God calls his Ministers *Salt*, Matth. 5. 13. but these would have them *Honey*, to preach only pleasing and humerous things unto them. Such were those, *Isa.* 30. 10. *They say to the Seers, see not, and to the Prophets, Prophesie not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, Prophesie deceits.* Great men many times have great corruptions, which they cannot endure should be touched, their tender ears cannot away with sound Doctrine, they must have smooth and pleasant things, or nothing, Courtiers love *Verba byssina*, soft and silken words. Though we approve of Prudence in Preaching before great ones, yet flattery we abhor. We may not betray the truth to please men; we are sent to profit, not to please; to edifie the heart, not to gratifie the ear. Had *Amos* preached high-flown Notions, or Doctrine without application, he might have been a Priest for *Bethel*; he might preach in generals, but he must not Prophesie of Gods Judgements against them, *Prophesie not*. Men can bear with Physitians, and suffer them to tell them of the Diseases of their Bodies; and the Lawyer, to tell them of the flawes in their estates; only the Minister, who is for the Soul, he must not speak a word. *Prophesie not*, whereas great men have most need of faithful Prophets, because

Multi favent Majestati, magis quam veritati. Bern.

:ause they are encompassed with so many flatterers.

3 *Wicked men put fair names upon foul places and practices.*

Bethel here was become *Beth-aven*, yet they call it a Sanctuary; when indeed it was the Devils Brothel-house, polluted with vile Idolatry and iniquity. So *Papists* put fine titles pon their foul wares, to vent them the better. The *Pope* calls imself the Servant of the Servants of God, yet makes himelf King of Kings, and is a profest enemy to Gods Servants. The *Quakers* call themselves the Saints of the most high, when hey are profest enemies to God, his Worship, wayes, &c. The *Arminians* seeme to magnifie Free-grace as much as ny of the Orthodox, but descend to particulars and their erours will soon appear. It is often professed by *Arminius* (saith Reverend Divine) that he attributes as much to Grace as ny other; that there is nothing said by others concerning he efficacy of Grace, which is not also affirmed by himself, ea that he acknowledgeth whatsoever may be thought or imagined for the opening and setting forth of the power of grace, and hat he is mis-reported by those that render him injurious to the grace of God, and one that attributes too much to Free-wil. We ind in *Augustine*, that *Pelagius* professeth as much concerning imself, and yet in the meane time this is true, that if *Arminius* his Opinion stand good, all this efficacy of grace which he so magnifies, and amplifies in words, depends on the will of man, in regard that by vertue of its native liberty, it may receive or reject this grace; use it or not use it; render it effectual or vain, &c. Thus he.

D. *Preston* in his Position of the irresistiblenes of converting Grace. p. 1, &c.

VER. 14, 15.

Then answered Amos, *and said to* Amaziah, *I was no Prophet, neither was I a Prophets Son, but I was an Herd-man, and a gatherer of Sycomore fruit.*

And the Lord took mee as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Goe Prophesie unto my people Israel.

WEE have seen *Amaziahs* design, by force and fraud to suppress *Amos*; we are now come to *Amos* his Answer, which consists of two parts; 1 An *Apology* for what

what he did, grounded upon Gods extraordinary calling him to the work. 2. His *Prophesie*, which is two-fold.

1 Particular, containing those particular Judgements which should befall

Amaziah.
His Wife.
His Children.

2 General, containing the utter destruction of *Israel*, vers. ult.

In these two Verses we have *Amos* his answer, wherein he constantly and couragiously maintaines what he had done; and is so farre from desisting or forsaking of his Station, that by an holy Antiperistasis he growes more bold and resolute, confirming what he had spoken against *Israel*, and adding moreover a dreadful Commination against this Arch-Priest for opposing him in the Work of the Lord. He feared not his imperious Injunctions, and Lordly Prohibition, but boldly asserts his Calling, and goes on in the exercise of it, maugre the malice of all opposition whatsoever.

So that here we have an Implicite reason, why *Amos* durst not desist from Prophecying to *Israel*, viz. because he was called extraordinarily by God to Prophesie unto them. He was no intruder, but a truly called and qualified Officer; he did nothing rashly or seditiously, but he seriously and soberly discharged the duties of that place to which God had so signally called him.

Now the better to clear his Call (which was the foundation of his comfort and confidence) he first tells us Negatively, what he was not, *I was no Prophet, nor Prophets Son, q. d.* I was no Prophet either by birth or breeding, either by Original or Succession. Some were chosen to be Prophets before they were bred or born, as *Jer.* 1. 5. others among the *Israelites* were Prophets by *succession*; others by *preparation*, were trained up betimes in the knowledge and study of the Scripture, in Colledges and Seminaries of Learning, to supply the wants of the Church. The Prophets that taught them, were called their *Fathers*. and the Scholars were called, *the Sons of the Prophets*, 2 King. 2. 3, 7, 15. & 4. 38. & 6. 1. Mar. 10. 24. *Amos* ingenuously confesseth, that he was none of these; hee

was

was neither *Nabi*, nor *Ben Nabi*, neither Prophet, nor Prophets Son; he was not brought up at *Bethel*, 2 King. 2. 3. or *Jericho*, vers. 5. or *Gilgal*, 2 King. 4. 38. nor at the feet of any learned *Gamaliel*.

2 Positively, he tells us plainly what he was, *viz.* an illiterate *Herdman* of the Tribe of *Judah*, dwelling at *Tekoa*, a City in *Judah*, but extraordinarily called by God, from his Country-calling, of feeding Cattel, to feed his people *Israel* with the Bread of Life, *Amos* 1. 1.

This he mentions not to make his Message contemptible, but to procure the more respect and authority to his Prophesie, since he was not called and qualified in an ordinary way, but immediately, and extraordinarily by God himself.

I was an Herdman; Such were useful in their kind, they had many of them in those dayes, because their riches lay much in cattel. Their lesser cattel were tended by Shepherds, and their greater by Herdmen, *Gen.* 13. 5. & 24. 35. & 26. 14. *Job* 1. 3. *Saul* himself before he was made King, was an Herdman, 1 *Sam.* 11. 5. q. d. *Behold the wonderful Works of God, that I who was never bred to this imployment should yet bee able to Prophesie, and to confound such learned Rabbies as you take your selves to be.*

Boker, bubulcus, quasi Bakar, bos, quia fuit custos boum.

And a gatherer of Sycamore Fruit.

Yet more to magnifie Gods Free-grace, he sets forth his mean condition from which the Lord had called him. He lived a solitary, country life, he was not bred up in Cities, or Academies, but amongst Herds and Stalls, contenting himself with such wild dyet as the Sycamores did afford. Most take the word *Sycamore* strictly, for a kind of wild Figgs, called *Ægyptian* Figgs, or Bastard mulberries, which the poorer sort of Rusticks in those times fed upon.

Sycamorus est arbor media inter ficum & morum, unde nomen ejus, à συκὴ *ficus*; & μορέα, *morus. Minshaw.*

But it may be taken Synecdochically, and Proverbially for any kind of course dyet or fare. *I was a gatherer of Sycamore fruit*; that is, I was a poor man, of a low condition, even of the same rank with those that use to feed upon wild Figgs; I did not then turn Prophet for my belly, for I had learned to fare hardly, which thou O *Amaziah*, and thy Court-Priests can hardly doe, and therefore you sooth up the Rulers in their Idolatry, that you may serve your owne turns, but Sycamore fruit will serve my turn.

Amos non hic tûs causâ Prophetabat, nam didicerat vitam Sycamoris & agrestibus aliis nebus tolerare. Junius.

V. A Lapide in locum, ubi plura.

Of *Sycamore-trees* there were great abundance in the Land of *Canaan*, as appears, 1 *King.* 10. 27. *Isa.* 9. 10. *Luk.* 19. 4. and in *Ægypt*, Psal. 78. 47. they were very fruitful, they bare fruit three or four times in the year, saith *Dioscorides*, lib. 1. c. 143. This fruit *Amos* might gather for himself, or for his family, or for to sell.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *As the Devil hath his* Amaziahs *to oppose the truth, so God his* Amoses *to defend it.*

The same day that *Pelagius* was born in *Britain*, the same day was Saint *Austine* born in *Affrica* to oppose him, as I have shewed elsewhere.

In my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 8. Obs. 2. p. 155.

2 *God often chuseth the weak things of the world to confound the mighty*, and the things that are not (of any esteeme in the world) to confound the things that are of great esteeme amongst them, 1 *Cor.* 1. 27, 28.

He usually hangs the greatest weights upon the weakest wyres, that so his name may have all the praise; if the Lord should alwayes work by excellent Instruments, we should Idolize the Instruments and forget God. Hence the Lord often passeth by the eloquent Orator, and the learned Scribe, and chuseth an illiterate *Amos*, sending him from the Crib to the Court, to witness against the Idolatry of Princes, Priests, and People.

Thus in the Civil State he oft chuseth persons of low degree to rule his people, as *Moses*, *Saul*, *David*, all three called from their Flocks and Herds to rule his people, *Exo.* 3. 1. 1 *Sam.* 9. 21. & 2 *Sam.* 7. 8. *Psal.* 113. 7. 8. Thus in the Ecclesiastical estate he called *Elisha* from the Plow, 1 *King.* 19. 19. *Matthew* from the receit of Customs; all the Apostles were illiterate men till Christ gifted them extraordinarily, and fitted them for their work, *Acts* 4. 13. God loves to shew his power in weakness that the glory may be his, 2 *Cor.* 12. 9. *Psal.* 8. 3. we have this Treasure in earthen Vessels, that the excellency of the power may bee of God, and not of us, 2 *Cor.* 4. 7.

See more in my Com. on 2 Tim. 4. 21. Obs. 3. p. 479.

Obj. *From hence the Anabaptists would cry down Universities, and Schools of Learning, the Lord took Amos from the Stall,*

and

and Elisha *from the Plow, and qualified them without study, what need then this studying and Schooling? &c.*

Ans. These were called extraordinarily, as appears by their extraordinary gifts; now extraordinary Cases cannot make an ordinary rule; because the Lord fed the *Israelites* with Mannah, it doth not therefore follow that we must sit still, and think to be so fed.

It is true, the *Anabaptists*, and fanatick frantick *Quakers*, doe all pretend to an extraordinary and immediate Call; when upon trial they are found not to have ordinary gifts, they can hardly write or read.

5 Examples in Scripture are not alwayes Argumentative, neither are we bound to follow them unless there bee a like call, causes, and other concurrent circumstances, as I have shewed elsewhere. In my Pulpit-Guard. p. 55, 49.

3 *Grace makes men constant and courragious.*

How roundly and undauntedly doth *Amos* here deal with *Amaziah*, notwithstanding all his threats and flatteries, yet he stands like a Rock, justifies his Calling, and denounceth Judgements against the false Prophet himself, and confirmes what he had spoken before against *Israel*. Thus the righteous are an everlasting foundation, *Prov.* 10. 25. The wicked fear where there is no ground of fear, and fly when none pursues them, but the righteous are bold as Lions, *Prov.* 28. 1. *Mark* 6. 18. *Acts* 23. 1.

Verse 15.

And the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Goe, Prophesie unto my people Israel.

Amaziah counselled *Amos* to goe back to *Judah* from whence he came; to this *Amos* replies, I cannot, I dare not; for as I came from thence by Divine command, so till I have the like command from him that sent me, I dare not return.

Amos comforts himself much with the sweet resent of that Call which he had from God, and therefore he tells us, how

Because *Amos* ſpeaks of a flock here, therefore ſome would gather that *Amos* was a Shepherd, but the word *Hatſon* is general, and relates to a flock of great Cattel, as well as ſmall.

the Lord took him as hee was feeding and following the Flocks, *and the Lord ſaid to him* (when he little thought of any ſuch imployment) *Goe, propheſie to my people Iſrael.* I did not thruſt my ſelf into the work, but it pleaſed the Lord to take me from that homely imployment, and to injoyn me this task of Propheſying.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *We muſt obey God rather than men.* Acts 4. 19. & 5. 29.

Si aliud jubet imperator, aliud Deus, quid judicatur? Major poteſtas Dei. Aug. de verb. Dom. Serm. 6.

Amaziah bids *Amos* be gone, but *Amos* ſayes, the Lord ſent him to *Iſrael* and he will not ſtirre. Thus he oppoſeth Gods Commandement to *Amaziahs* prohibition. We may obey no man but *in* and *for the Lord*, Epheſ. 6. 1. Hence the Midwives are commended for diſobeying the wicked commands of *Pharaoh*, who would have had all the male Children killed, *Exod.* 1. 17.

2 *God loves to appear to us when we are in our Callings.*

Thus God appeared to *Moſes* when he was keeping Sheep, *Exod.* 3. 1. to *David*, when he was following the Ewes; to *Saul*, when he was ſeeking Aſſes; to *Amos* here, when he was following the Herd; and to the Woman of *Samaria*, when ſhe was drawing water, *Joh.* 4. 7.

3 *When God calls us to forſake all we muſt readily doe it.*

God commands *Amos* to leave his Herds, the Apoſtles to forſake their Nets, *Abraham* to forſake his owne Country and Kindred, *Zachens* to come down and follow Chriſt, and they immediately did ſo, *Mat.* 4. 19, 26. *Luke* 19. 6. *Gen.* 12. 1, 4. True grace makes men willing to doe or ſuffer whatever God commands.

4 *None may take upon them the Miniſtery without a Call.*

Amos ſtirres not till God ſayes, *Goe*; no man may aſſume this Office till he be called, *Heb.* 5. 4. ſhould an Angel from Heaven come and preach, he muſt ſhew his Call, he may not violate the order which God hath ſet in his Church, *Gal.* 1. 8. Hence the Lord ſo oft complaines of falſe Prophets, that they ran and he ſent them not, *Jer.* 14. 14. many run from their Callings without a Call, *Zach.* 13. 5. let ſuch never look either

ther for protection, or success; let them preach never so loud, or so long, they shall never profit people because God is against them, *Jer.* 23. 32. I am against them that Prophesie false Dreams, and cause my people to erre by their lyes and lightness, yet *I sent them not*, mark what follows, *therefore they shall not profit this people*; that is, they shall doe them much hurt and mischief, it is a *Meiosis*.

Be sure then to have a Call for what you doe, this will support you under your burdens, and comfort you in the midst of all tentations and trials, *Dan.* 3. 16, 17, 18. *Acts* 4. 19, 20. if the Lord have called us he will keep us, *Isa.* 42. 6. this is as a brazen wall to secure us; this made *Amos* so resolute and confident against *Amaziah*, and *Nathan* so free with *David*, *Elijah* with *Ahab*, *John Baptist* with *Herod*, and the *Apostles* with the world; it was the warrant of their Calling, that they had it from God, and not from man.

See more in my Pulpit-Guard. Arg. 2. p. 11, 12, 17.

This will make our Ministery successful, one *Elijah* sent by God, shall be too hard for two hundred and fifty false Prophets, though King *Ahab* and Queen *Jezabel* joyn with them, and ovvne them.

Ver. 16.

Now therefore hear the Word of the Lord, thou sayest, Prophesie not against Israel, and drop not thy word against the house of Isaac.

Amos comes now to direct his speech to *Amaziah*, who had forbidden him to Prophesie, *Thou sayest, Prophesie not against Israel.* To this Prohibition *Amos* opposeth Gods Injunction, and is so farre from desisting, that he denounceth Gods Judgements against him, and bids him attend to what he had to say from the Lord against him. q. d. *Who art thou O vaine and vile man, that darest thus affront and contradict the Almighty; So that when he saith, Goe, Prophesie to* Israel, *yet thou sayest, Goe not to* Israel, *neither Prophesie there, but goe to* Judah, *and prophesie there. Hear therefore what the Lord hath determined against thee, Thy Wife shall be an Harlot in the City, thy Children shall fall by the sword, &c.*

In these two last Verses we have a four-fold Judgement denounced against this Persecuting Priest, *vers.* 17.

2 Here is the Procatarctical cause of these Judgements, and that was his opposing *Amos* in the Work of the Lord, using all means to silence him.

3 Here is a confirmation of the former Commination against *Israel*, ver. 11. *Hear the Word of the Lord.* We have heard thee speak, now doe thou hear God speak, for his Word is not like thine, a vaine, empty, ineffectual word; but a mighty, powerful, efficacious word, bringing down dreadful things upon the heads of malicious Persecutors, 2 *Cor.* 10. 6. God is ready to revenge the disobedience done to his commands. Gods Word layes hold on wicked men, *Zach.* 1. 6. and that which they accounted wind, becomes like fire to devour them, *Jer.* 5. 13, 14.

Thou sayest, Prophesie not against Israel, and drop not thy word against the house of Isaac; that is, Prophesie not of Gods Judgements against the ten Tribes, who were descended from *Abraham* by *Isaac* the Son of the Promise, *Gen.* 21. 12. see before vers. 9.

This *dropping* here is Metaphorical, and denotes those dreadful Judgements which should fall upon the heads of wicked men like a storme of raine, *Ezek.* 20. 46. & 21. 2, 3.

2 Dropping in Scripture is frequently taken in the sweetest sense, for gentle and sweet speaking, *Deut.* 32. 2. *Job* 29. 22. *My doctrine shall drop as the raine, and distill as the dew*; that is, it shall bee as useful and refreshing to men, as the dew and raine is to the grass; as these soften the ground, and so make the fruites to grow up sweetly and abundantly; so the Word of God falling into an honest and good heart becomes effectual, making it more soft and fruitful in every good work, *Isa.* 55. 10. *Luke* 8. 15.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Wicked men are Antipodes to God.*

They goe directly contrary to his commands. God bids *Amos* Prophesie against *Israel*, *Amaziah* forbids him. God bids *Amos* drop and denounce Judgements against *Israel*; no matter, *Amaziah*, if thou wilt drop, goe drop at *Judah*, for we will none of thy dropping here. So true is that of *Luther*, *Homo est inversus decalogus*, Man is a cross-grained-peece, directly

directly opposite to all Gods commands. There is in our Nature a deadly enmity to God, his Wayes, his Worship, his Word, his Ordinances, his Prophets, his People, and to all that is good, *Rom.* 8. 7. *Col.* 1. 21.

VER. 17.

Therefore thus saith the Lord, thy Wife shall be an Harlot in the City, and thy Sons and Daughters shall fall by the Sword, and thy Land shall be divided by Line, and thou shalt dye in a polluted Land, and Israel *shall surely goe into Captivity forth of his owne Land.*

IN this Verse we have a dreadful Judgement denounced against this High-Priest of *Bethel*, consisting of many Branches.

1 Constupration of his Wife, and that openly.
2 Loss of his Children.
3 Loss of his Lands.
4 Loss of his Liberty, and
5 Loss of *Israel*.

Loe, this is the fruit of silencing Preachers, and forbidding Gods Ministers to Prophesie.

2 Here is the confirmation, or ratification of all this, *Dixit Dominus*, the Lord hath said it, who will certainly doe it.

Thy Wife shall be an Harlot in the City.

Interpreters are divided about the meaning of these words; some take them Actively, and the Original seems to favour it, *viz.* that his Wife should be an open Harlot, and a common Strumpet, not so much forced by Souldiers, as voluntarily addicted to it.

Zanah, fornicatus, scortatus fuit. It implies a voluntary act. So Gen. 38. 24. Judg. 19. 2. Ezek. 13. 34. Hos. 4. 13, 14.

Others take the words Passively, that she should be violently forced and ravished by the *Assirians* when they should take the City, according to that threatning against disobedient ones, *Deut.* 28. 30. So *Job* 31. 10. *Isa* 13. 16. *Lament.* 5. 11.

But if it were violent and involuntary, where were the Harlotry? *Thy Wife shall be an Harlot*, and to shew her impu-

Grandis dolor incredibilis in ignominia quando maritus in media civitate uxoris injuriam prohibere non potest; non est tantus dolor in filia construpata, quantus in uxore polluta; maritus enim libentius audit uxorem interfici, quam pollut. Hieron.

impudency, she should act it not in the house, or in the fields, or in a forreign Land, but openly in the City.

This is the first Punishment, the second follows.

2 *Thy Sons and thy Daughters shall fall by the sword.*

Wicked Parents bring a Curse upon their Children, not only their Cattel, but all their Relations fare the worse for them.

Chebel, funis, Metonymycos capitur pro parte seu tractu terræ funiculis mensurato.

3 Yet this is not all, *Thy Land shall be divided by Line.* Conquerours were wont to divide every one his Lot and portion by Lines and Cords; for of old they used Cords instead of Measuring-Rods, to divide their Land. Hence the *Lines* in Scripture are put for the Inheritance, or portion allotted to every one by Line, *Deut.* 32. 9. 2 *Sam.* 8. 2. *Psal.* 16. 6. *Micha* 2. 5. Thus he should not only lose his Heires, but his Inheritance also.

And thou shalt dye in a polluted Land.

This is the fourth Punishment, Thou shalt dye a Captive in *Assyria*, which was polluted with Heathenism and Idolatry.

This is reckoned as a Judgement, *Levit.* 26. 38. against *Pashur*, Jer. 20. 6. and *Coniah*, Jer. 22. 25, 26. The Land of Promise was called the Holy Land, and in comparison of it all other Nations were called and counted unclean, and they looked upon it as a misery to be buried in a strange Land, and not in *Canaan*.

And Israel *shall goe into Captivity.*

Not only thou, but all *Israel* whom thou hast helpt to deceive, and hast hardned in their Idolatry and Sin, shall goe into Captivity with thee; and this men get by following Idolaters and Impostors, when the blind lead the blind both fall into the ditch.

Israel shall surely goe into captivity. God will no longer bear with them, since King and Kingdom are setled upon their Lees, and had so long sinned together, now the Lord tells them that they should suffer together, and goe Captives into *Assyria*,

Assyria, as we see 2 *King.* 15. 29. & 17. 6, 18, 23, 24. & 18. 11. since they had abused that good Land which the Lord had given them, now it should spew them out for their Idolatry.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *God useth to retaliate Sinners, and to pay them in their owne coyn.*

This we see here excellently exemplified in *Amaziah*.

1 He inticed *Israel* to Idolatry, which is Spiritual Harlotry, therefore his Wife shall be an Harlot.

2. He had destroyed those that were Gods Children by external profession, therefore his Children were destroyed.

3 He made his Goods his God, and was all for gain, therefore now he shall lose all.

4. He that had polluted Gods People, shall now dye in a polluted Land. He that would not follow the true God to his Salvation, shall follow false ones to his own destruction.

2 *Silencing and persecuting of Gods faithful Ministers is a God-provoking Sin.*

Thou sayest, Prophesie not, what follows? therefore thy Wife, thy Children, thy State, thy Self, and the Land of thy Nativity shall smart for it. Now, if *Amaziah* paid so dear for endeavouring to silence one faithful *Amos*, what may they expect who doe actually blow out many burning and shining Lights? &c. let such remember *Pashur*, Jer. 20. 2, 3, 4. and *the men of* Anathoth, *Jer.* 11. 21, 22, 23. and *Jeroboam* the first with his withered hand, which was smitten for stretching it forth against the Prophet, 1 *King.* 13. and *Elimas* the Sorcerer, who was smitten blind for opposing the truth, Acts 13. 10, 11. never any man hardned himself against God, especially in this kind that ever prospered, *Job* 9. 4. *Amaziah* had many other sins, as Idolatry, Superstition, Covetousness, &c. but this Persecuting of *Amos* was his fatal sin, and ruined both him and his. See more on ver. 13. Obs. 1.

3 *Wicked Parents bring a Curse upon their Posterity.*

God ofs punisheth the sins of the Fathers upon the Children, to the third and fourth Generation of them that hate him, *Exod.* 20. 5. & 34. 7. *Deut.* 28. 18, 32, 41. *Jer.* 29. 32. See more in *Caryl* on Job 5. 5. p. 200. and *Hieron.* on Exod. 34. 7. & in my Com. on Hos. 13. ult. p. 80. and Dr. *Gouge* on Heb. 11. 28

Lam. 5. 7. the seed of evil-doers shall never be renowned, *Isa.* 14. 20.

4 *Goods ill gotten seldome prosper.*

Malè parta malè dilabuntur.

Treasures of wickedness profit not, *Prov.* 10. 2. *Amaziah* had scraped much wealth together, but his enemies became his heirs. And so it is with many Usurers, and oppressing Cormorants, who treasure up riches for their enemies.

5 *Marriage is lawful in Ministers as well as others.*

The Apostle tells us, that Marriage is honourable not only in some, but in all sorts and degrees of men, *Heb.* 13. 4. *Marriage is honourable* ἐν πᾶσι *in all men*, and God himself hath appointed it for the comfort of all degrees, *Gen.* 1. 28. & 2. 18. and bids him that cannot contain, marry, 1 *Cor.* 7. 2, 9. none can vow that which is not in his owne power; but continency is the gift of God, *Matth.* 19. 11. all cannot receive this saying, and therefore not only *Amaziah* here, but the Priests and Prophets in the Old Testament had Wives; *Zachariah* the Priest hath an *Elizabeth* to his Wife, and shee descended of the Daughters of *Aaron*, Luke 1. 5. *Jeremiah* was the Son of a Priest, *Jer.* 1. 1. and *Hophni* and *Phineas* the Sons of *Eli* the Priest, 1 *Sam.* 1. 3. and *John Baptist* the Son of *Zachariah* the Priest; yea many of the Apostles had Wives, as *Peter*, *Philip*, *James*, and *Barnabas*, Mat. 8. 14. Acts 13. 2. Saint *Ambrose* affirms, that all the Apostles were married save *John* and *Paul*, and the Apostle expresly saith, that he had power to marry as well as *Cephas*, 1 Cor. 9. 5. and he allows a Bishop to have one wife, *Titus* 1. 6. It is one mark of Antichrist to maintaine that Doctrine of Devils, in forbidding the marriage of Ministers, 1 *Tim.* 4. 1, 3.

See this Point largely and learnedly debated, *Pro & con*, by Mr *Bell* in his Survey of Popery Part 3 Char. 3. p. 218, &c. *Gravius peccat Sacerdos si uxorem ducat, quàm si domi concubinam foveat. Coster. Enchirid. cap.* 17. *propos.* 9.

This Prohibition of Marriage hath filled the World with Whoredome, Sodomy, Bestiality and Incest, and therefore *Paphnutius* a famous Primitive Confessor, though himself were unmarried, yet mightily perswaded and prevailed with the *Nicene* Council, that they should not decree any thing against Priests Marriage.

Hist. Tripart. lib 2 *c.* 14. *R. Sozom. Hist. Eccles. l.* 1 *c.* 4.

The moderate sort of Papists have allowed of Priests Marriages,

Marriages, as *Gratian*, *Panormitan*, and others, even *Bellarmine* himself confesseth, that there is no Precept in the Old or new Testament against Ministers marriage; and we in *England* are bound to blessGod for the married Clergy. How many *Dods*, *Dykes*, *Wheatlies*, *Whitakers*, *Rogerses*, *Byfields*, &c. and other eminent Lights is this Church furnisht withall, from the pious and reverend Clergy-men of this Land. It is a choyce Mercy to a Land, when the Lord shall raise up from amongst our selves *Nazarites* to serve in the Sanctuary, *Amos* 2. 11.

Copula sacerdotalis, nec legali, nec Evangelicâ, nec Apostolicâ authoritate prohibetur. Gratian. Q. 26. S. 2. Bellar. de Clericis, l. 1. c. 18.

Caut. Yet as all persons, so young Ministers especially should not be rash and hasty in their Marriages, but should get a competent Library first, and some gravity and solidity, that they may be able to walk exemplarily before their flocks, and that they may not dishonour this honourable Ordinance of God, with any levity or vanity.

See Mr. *Chaney* his Ser. on Amos 2. 11. printed 1655.

[For the lawfulness of Ministers Marriage, see B. *Hall*, Epis. 3. Dec. 2. and his Treatise stiled, *The Honour of the Married Clerg.* *Zegedin* loc. com. p. 444. *Davenant.* Determ. Quest. 43. *Perkins* 2. Vol, Demonstr. of the Problem, p. 574. *Mornay de Missa.* l. 2. c. 8. *Erasmus* Tom. 5. p. 513. D. *Wilt.* Synops. Papis. Error 83. p. 291, &c.] and Mr. *Fox* Martyrolog. Vol. 2. p. 464, &c. See more in the Index of the *Book of Martyrs*, in the word *Marriage*. B. *Morton* Protest. Appeal, lib. 1. c. 2. Sect. 32. p. 38. ad 46. *Ames.* *Bellarm.* Servat. Tom. 2. l. 3. p. 131. *Osiand.* Enchirid. Controv. contra Pap. Q. 21. p. 417. ad 456. *Pareus* in 1 Cor. 7. Q. 3. col. 448. *Gerard.* Loc. Com. Tom. 6. col. 369. ad 434.

CORONIS.

Hic præsentis Historiæ sit usus, ut Amasias, qui hodie sibi in ecclesia dominium vendicant, caveamus, & constanter retineamus veram fidei confessionem, quam ex Dei verbo didicimus. Walter.

The end of the Seventh Chapter.

AN EXPOSITION, WITH Practical OBSERVATIONS UPON The Eighth Chapter of *Amos*.

VERSE 1, 2, 3.

Thus hath the Lord God shewed unto mee, and behold a basket of Summer fruit.

And he said, Amos, what seest thou? and I said, a basket of Summer fruit. Then said the Lord unto mee, The end is come upon my people of Israel; I will not again pass by them any more.

And the Songs of the Temples shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord God, there shall be many dead bodies in every place, they shall cast them forth with silence.

THe Lord having tryed many conclusions upon this people, and used all means to reclaim them, but in vain; he therefore sends the Prophet to them, to declare their final ruine, which he doth in this Chapter by the vision of a basket of Summer fruit, noting thereby the peness of their sins, and their neerness to ruine.

The Prophet had before set forth the Judgments which

were coming upon this people, by three Types and Visions. 1. By the Type of *Grasshoppers and Locusts*, God did shadow out the famine, chap. 7. 2. By *fire*, devouring the great deep, is set forth War, chap. 7. 4,5,6. 3. By a *Plumb line*, is set forth the overthrow of the Kingdome, and the Kings house, chap. 7.7. 4. We have here a fourth Vision, where by a basket of Summer fruit, is set forth the final destruction of the ten Tribes. So that in this chapter we have the summe of *Amos* his sixth Sermon, wherein is a Type propounded and expounded, Or 1. A *Commination* of the total overthrow of the Kingdome of Israel, set forth under the type of a basket of Summer fruit, *vers.* 1, 2, 3.

2. Here is an *Amplification of the Commination*, the better to awaken these secure sinners, set forth by a particular enumeration of those dreadful Judgements, both corporal and spiritual, which were coming on them, and that in so dreadful a manner, that the Sun should be darkened, and no light of consolation appear. The Land should tremble, and every one mourn bitterly, as for the loss of an onely Son, *vers.* 7. Desolation like an over-flowing flood should run over all, *Vers.* 3.

Their feasting should be turned into fasting, and their prosperity into deplorable misery. This is set forth, 1. *Metaphorically*, vers. 9. *I will cause the Sun to go down at noon.*

2. *Plainly*, vers. 3, to 13. I will turn your feasts into weeping, and your beautiful Virgins and strong young men shall perish.

3. Their Pastors should be taken from them, and they should have a spiritual famine of the preaching of the Word, it should be so scarce, that it was not to be found, *vers.* 11, 12. They had loathed this Mannah, and now they should be made to know the worth of it, by the wanting of it.

4. Utter destruction, *vers.* 14. *They shall fall and never rise up again.*

3. Here is the ground of this Commination, or the impulsive and meritorious cause of all this sorrow, viz. the sins of *Israel*, as 1. Their oppression of the poor, *vers.* 4.

2. Their covetousness and greedinesse after gain, counting all time lost that was spent in the service of God, because it brought no present profit, therefore they say, *when will the New-Moon be gone?* verse 5.

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Verse 1.

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The Prophet begins with a Vision or Parable, which contains the substance of the whole Sermon, by a lively type bespeaks sorrow *Israels* utter ruine; and to procure the more authority to what he spake, he begins with his usual preface, which he prefixes before his former Visions, *chap.* 7. 1. 4. 7. *Thus hath the Lord shewed mee.* The Lord the God of *Israel*, whose name is *Jehovah*, the onely true God, who cannot deceive, nor be deceived; he is the Author of this Vision, I am but the Penman and rustick Instrument to declare it to you, 2 *Pet.* 1. 21.

In the Verse itself, we have, 1. An *Exordium* or Preface, *Thus hath the Lord shewed mee*, *q. d.* I bring you no Vision of mine own brain, but what I tell you I have received from the Lord, the Vision I had from him, and therefore in his name do I require attention.

2. Here is a note of Attention, *Behold*, which is here an *Eye-Ecce*, though oft in Scripture it be an *Ear-Ecce*, calling upon men to hearken; yet here 'tis an Eye-*Ecce*, and calls upon them to see a Vision, so 'tis used, *John* 1. 29, 47. This word *Behold*, like the hand in the Margent of a Book, points to some notable thing, and is like the sounding of a Trumpet before some famous proclamation, or the ringing of a Bell before an excellent Sermon. Of this see more on Amos 4. *ult.* & 6. 12.

3. Here is the Vision to be attended and observed, and that is, *A basket of Summer fruit.* Amos saw a basket of Summer fruit. After all the Visions means and menaces which the Lord had given them, he adds yet this, *Of a basket of Summer fruit*, if at last he might work upon their hard hearts. By this sacred Hieroglyphick, the Lord typifies the manner of *Israels* end, and shews it to the Prophet in Vision, the better to affect both Prophet and People.

Kajitz, æstatis, i. e. est vorum fructuum, qui æstate maturuerunt, & tum decerpendi sunt. Mist. Athnachi, Tempus pro iis quæ sunt in tempore ut videre est, 2 Sam. 16. 1. Isa. 16. 9.

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Verse 2.

And he said, Amos, what seest thou? and I said, A basket of summer fruit, then said the Lord unto me, the end is come upon my people Israel, *I will not again pass by them any more.*

IN the precedent Verse we had the Type propounded, in this Verse it is expounded.

The better to awaken both Prophet and People, and to quicken their attention,

1 The Lord questions with the Prophet, *Amos, what seest thou?* Questions and Colloquies are more vively, and make a deeper impression than plain positive assertions; hence the Lord so often useth them, *Amos* 7. 8. *Zach.* 4. 2. & 5. 2.

2 Here is the Prophets answer, *And I said, a basket of summer fruit.* This was the Vision which the Lord shewed him, what these ripe fruits were, whether Cherries, as some affirm, or Figgs, as others; or Pears, Plumbs, Grapes, as others; or Apples, as *A Lapide* labours more subtilly, than solidly to prove by eight Analogies, it is not material for us to know; it is sufficient that they were summer fruits, gathered towards the end of summer, when fruits ripen, and even fall into the hands of the gatherer.

3 Here is the Lords explanation of this Vision, *Then said the Lord unto me, the end is come upon my people of Israel.* There is an elegant Paranomasy between the two Hebrew words, *viz.* that which signifies summer fruits, and that which signifies an end; they both sound much alike, so that the one may easily put us in mind of the other; the ripeness of their sins, of the nearness of their ruine.

Kajitz, æstas; Ketz, finis.

The Lord had tried all means and medicines, both as a Father, and a Physitian to cure this people, but since they were incorrigible and incurable, he now resolves to trouble himself and his Prophets no more with them, for now he intends utterly to destroy them, *The end is come.* Hypocrites and presumptuous sinners are wont to promise themselves a longer time still, No (saith the Lord) you are ripe for ruine, and therefore now you shall reap the fruit of your owne wayes, I will

will bear no longer with you; but as ripe fruit falls of its own kind with ease, so shall this people drop into the mouth of the *Assyrian*, now that the term and time decreed by God for their final overthrow is come. As men gather ripe fruits into their Baskets, and then eate them, so shall the cruel and greedy *Assyrian* devour and destroy those rebellious sinners who are ripe and ready for destruction, and therefore the Lord addes,

I will not again pass by them any more.

The like expression wee have, *Amos* 7. 8. *q. d.* I will not spare them, nor pass by their sins any more, as I have done. So *Micah* 7. 18. the Lord is said *to pardon and pass by the sins of his people*; but these had so provoked him, that he would no longer defer the punishment of their iniquity. They had enjoyed a long summer of peace and prosperity, which instead of ripening their Graces, had ripened their Vices, and therefore now the Lord resolves to make a final end with them, and utterly to consume them from the face of the earth.

Non ad eorum impietates illa connivere, nec impunitas praeterire. Mercer.

As if the Lord had said, *The cry of their sins is so great, that I can no longer forbear them, but I will execute my Justice upon them without any inclination to mercy, which they have so grievously abused; it is true, I have formerly plucke off some of their fruits, and have destroyed some of their people; but now I will come with a basket, and gather all that grows upon Israel; and will make such an end of this gathering, that there shall bee no more of this kind left for hereafter.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Sacred and Majestick Rhetorick* becomes the *Ministers of Christ.*

A vain, light, frothy, flourish of words is below the Ministers of Christ, but a grave, solid, serious stirling out of acceptable words, the better to work upon the affections of people, becomes our calling. Hence the Lord himself here useth an Eroteses, a Paranomasie, &c. Metaphors, &c.

See more, Amos 6. 1. Obs. 1. & Camero in Mat. 18. 8. p. 114, 115, 116. folio.

2. *When the Sins of a People are ripe and full, God will no longer spare them.*

He lets the wicked fill up the measure of their iniquity before he destroys them, *Gen.* 15. 16. *Joel* 3. *Nah.* 3. 12, 13. *Revel.*

Revel. 14. 18. Though he be at long yet he will not alwayes bear, but when sin is come to maturity, he will cut it down with the sickle of his wrath, and will recompence his patience with the fierceness of his fury; and then though *Noah*, *Job*, and *Daniel* should stand before him for such a people, yet they could not prevail, *Ezek.* 14. 14, 20. nor preserve them from ruine, *Jer.* 16. 5. *Lam.* 4. 18. *Ezek.* 5. 11. 6. 7. 5, 6. *Nah.* 1. 8, 9.

Q. *But when are a people ripe for ruine?*

A. I have shewed at large elsewhere, *viz.* when the multitude, magnitude, strength, growth, impudency, and obstinacy of peoples sins are come to the height, then is a peoples downfall near; which no Preaching, no Praying, no Judgements, no Mercies can better a People, but they fall away more and more, and grow worse and worse, it is a most certain sign that sin is ripe, and that people nigh to ruine.

In my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. p. 199, 110.

3. *God will not spare his own people when they rebel against him.*

Though *Israel* be his People, and in Covenant with him, yet if they walk not up to the terms of the Covenant, God will cast them off, and bring *an end* even upon *Israel*, for so saith the text, *The end is come upon my people of* Israel. People are apt to shoot themselves up in their Priviledges, and to think that their Prerogatives should save them from wrath, but in vain, as I have shewed elsewhere.

In my Com. on Hos. 13. 5. Obs. 3. & 4.

VERSE 3.

And the Songs of the Temples shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord God, there shall be many dead bodies in every place, they shall cast them forth with silence.

THe Prophet goes on to amplifie the greatness of the approaching Judgements, the better to awaken them; to this end he tells them: 1. That the Songs of the Temples used at their sacred Solemnities, and Divine Service should cease, and be turned to howling and lamentation for the miseries that should come upon them. This *Howling* notes the greatness of the grief, and the height of horrour which should surprize them; they should not only *weep* for the calamities which should come upon them, but they should weep till they howl again

again for anguish of spirit. Hence when sore Judgements light upon a people, we read of howling, wayling, and weeping joyned together, *Isa.* 15. 3. *Jer.* 4. 8. *Ezek.* 21. 12. *Hos.* 7. 14. *Micah* 2. 8.

Q. *But what is meant by the Temple here?*

A. The word signifies both a Palace, and a Temple; and therefore some render it, *The Songs of the Palace shall be howlings*, *q. d.* those Palaces and great Houses of the great ones, which have been hitherto filled with Mirth and Musick, shall be now filled with weeping and howling. The Septuagint and the Vulgar mistaking the word *Scirot*, *cantica*, render it, *Cardines & laquearia Templi stridebunt*, but the word signifies a Temple, as well as a Palace; and by it here is meant not so much the Temple at *Jerusalem*, (which was not destroyed till a considerable time after) but the Idolatrous Temple of *Bethel*, where the golden Calves were, and other high places where they had set up Idols; for though this Prophet doth sometimes glance at *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, yet the primary bent of his Prophecy is against *Samaria*, and the ten Tribes, as appears. vers. 14. *I will punish those that swear by the sin of Samaria*, which was not farre from *Bethel*, against whose Idolatry *Amos* so much inveighed, *Amos* 7. 13.

Ululabunt cantica Palatii. Vatabl. & Montan.

2. There should be so great a Mortality of all sorts and Sexes, that many should dye by the Sword, Plague, Famine, Captivity, and other Judgements, every word hath its weight. There shall be *dead Bodies*, *many* dead Bodies, many dead Bodies *in all places*, and these shall *be cast out with silence*, *i. e.* they shall cast them into common pits, and bury them without lamentation, or any funeral solemnity. The word *Has*, *Tace*, *Sile*, is the same with *Amos* 6. 10. *Be silent*. Some give the same sense of the word as they do, *Amos* 6. 10. he that buries the dead shall say to him that helps him, *Be silent*, not a word, for God is just in all that he hath brought upon us for our Apostasie and Idolatry. So the word is used, *Amos* 5. 13. & 6. 10. *Hab.* 2. 20 *Zeph.* 1. 7. *Zach.* 2. 13. or else thus, Throw these dead bodies into pits and say nothing, lest we be sequestred as unclean by the Law.

Rab happeger, multiplex, cadaver, i. e. *multa erunt cadavera, multi occidentur.* It is a kind of Aposiopesis, when men are angry and troubled, so that they curtail their words: many dead bodies in every place, *i. e.* there shall be many dead bodies in every place. See my Schools-Guard on that figure.

3 Here is the time when all this misery should fall upon them, viz. *In that day*, i. e. in the day of *Israels* final overthrow.

4 Here is the certainty of all this, *Dixit Dominus*, *The Lord*, who cannot lye, *hath spoken it.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *The joy of Idolatrous worshippers shall end in sorrow.*

They may feast, and fiddle, and sing for a time, and walk in the light of those sparks wch themselves have kindled, but this they shall have at Gods hands, *they shall lye down in sorrow*, Isa. 50. *ult.* God hates both them and their singing, and will turn their songs into howling, *Amos* 5. 23. Superstitious persons are apt to think that God is delighted as they are, with Musick, Singing, and a little formal sacrificing in the Temple, but the Prophet tells them, such carnal joy shall end in howling. The Lord had given them a little success, and they conceited presently that they were highly in Gods favour (for wicked men are apt to measure Gods favour to them by present enjoyments and outward prosperity) and therefore they goe to singing (as Papists now use to doe) in their Temples, yet with self-respects; hence the Prophet thunders out wrath and Judgement against them; for those that will not sincerely sing to God in a time of grace, shall be forced to howl in a time of wrath. Those that will not serve God with gladness of heart in the abundance of all things, shall serve him in sadness of heart in the want of all things, *Deut.* 28. 47, 48. In *Nehemiahs* time neither Princes, Priests, nor people would serve God in that fat Land which he had given them, therefore they were made Slaves to their enemies, *Neh.* 9. 34, 35, 36, 37. So *Psal.* 106. 39, 40, 41, 42. when they fell from God to Idols, he sold them into their enemies hands for a prey. When the Gospel comes with tenders of grace to a people, and they re ect them, such shall be slain, *Luke* 19. 14, 27.

2 *Sin brings Gods sore Judgements upon a people.*

See more in my Com. on Hos. 13. 12. Obs. 1. & 13. 13. Obs. 9. & 13. 16. Obs. 6.

It brings Sword, Plague, Famine, *Ezek.* 14. 21. which lay heaps upon heaps, and sweep away thousands in a short space; so that there are *many dead bodies in all places.* Sin makes men fall and fly before Gods Judgements, as leaves before a mighty

mighty wind, *Isa.* 64. 6. See more before on *Amos* 4. 10. & 6. 9.

3. *Want of decent burial is reckoned as a temporal Judgement upon the wicked.*

They shall cast them out with silence, and none shall make lamentation for them, as they usually did in those daies. But of this at large, on *Amos* 6. 10.

Verse 4, 5.

Hear this yee that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the Land to fail,

Saying, when will the New-Moon be gone, that we may sell Corn? &c.

THe Prophet having set forth the calamities which were coming upon *Israel*, hee now comes to set forth the ground and cause of these calamities, and that was,

1. Their oppression, cruelty, covetousness, and unrighteousness towards men, *vers.* 4, 5, 6.

2. Irreligion and Idolatry towards God, *vers.* 5, 14. They had broken both Tables, both high and low, and that with an high hand, against great light and love, and therefore the Lord resolves now to root them out. And because secure sinners, (especially great men) are apt to flatter themselves, and to think themselves priviledged, and that God loves them because he doth not presently punish them; therefore the Prophet by an Apostrophe turns his speech unto them, and that he might the better awaken them, he begins, as oft before, with an *Audite hoc*, *Hear this*, O yee brutish men that swallow up the poor and needy. Hear and fear those threatnings which I denounce against you from the Lord, *vers.* 2, 3. Awaken at last, and see what dreadful destruction is at your doors, that by unfained repentance ye may prevent it.

In this Verse we have 1. The Prophets Alarum to drowsie sinners, *Hear this.*

2. Here are the parties alarumed, and these are primarily, the tyrannical, oppressing Rulers of *Israel.* 2. The inferiour sort, who sinned in their degree, and had their peculiar sins as well as others; These covetous Cormorants are here set forth

Paraphraſtically, by their greedy devouring of the poor. *O yee that ſwallow up the needy*, that pant and gape as almoſt windleſs after them, *Amos* 2.7. getting their goods, eating their fleſh, drinking their blood, and making them live ſo ſlaviſhly, that their life was but a lingring death; and this they did by laying heavy burdens upon them, partly by Bribery and Uſury, partly by racking their Rents, and by inhauncing the rate of food and other neceſſarie things which they had ingroſſed into their own hands; and ſo made the poor to ſpend what they had, and for meer neceſſity to become their ſlaves.

Shaaph, abſorbere, deglutire, anhelare, ardenter cupere.

The word in the fountain ſignifies to ſoop up, to devour, and earneſtly to pant after a thing; As a thirſty man ſwallows down drink with abundance of eagerneſs and delight; or as the Whale and great beaſts ſwallow the little ones up at a bit, *Gen.* 37. 20. & 41. 21. So did theſe cruel, covetous Harpys devour the poor without any pity or compaſſion, *Job* 5. 5. & 7. 2. *Pſal.* 56. 2. & 57. 4. The participle of the Preſent Tenſe, notes the conſtancy of their cruelty, they were alwaies devouring, it was their very Trade to preſs upon the poor.

Haſhſhaphim ebion, abſorbentes egenum.

3. Here is the height of their cruelty, they ſo oppreſt the poor, that they were not able to ſubſiſt. *They make the poor of the Land to fail.* They uſed all means to diſpatch and deſtroy them out of the Land, that ſo they might live alone in the Earth.

Ad abolendum manſuetos terra. Montan.

Object. *But ſure they were ſome wicked men whom they uſed thus.*

Anſw. No, they were the afflicted, meek and lowly of the Land. The meek and modeſt poor are expoſed to many miſeries and injuries of mighty men, theſe cannot reſiſt, and ſo become a prey to them, *James* 2. 6. & 5. 6. as little fiſh do to the great ones. Unreaſonable creatures know whom they may be bold withall, and ſo do oppreſſors; A Crow will ſtand on a Sheeps back, and pull off wooll, they durſt not be ſo bold with a Woolf or Maſtiff.

Gnanave, manſuetos, modeſtos, pauperes.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Men are very deaf and hard of hearing, eſpecially when they are told of their ſins.*

And therefore the Prophet begins with an Emphatical *Hear*

yee

yee this. They were deaf, and loath to attend, because they had no desire to amend. Sinners have so many shifts, and their deceitful hearts finde out so many evasions, that the Lord is fain to bid his Prophet cry, and cry aloud, that all may hear and be awakened out of their deep sleep. So *Isa.* 58. 1. *Micah* 6. 9.

2. *Ministers must not stick to reprove great men when they are great sinners.*

They must cry with the Prophet, *Hear this O yee Rulers.* They do more mischief by their evil example, and therefore the Prophet begins with them; besides, they set their hearts as the heart of God, *Ezek.* 28. 6. and think themselves above reproof, and above controul, and therefore the Lord will have his Prophets reprove them, than they may know they be but men.

See more in my Com. on Amos 4. 1. Obs. 4.

3. *Oppressing of the poor is a crying sin.*

It provokes the Lord to a controversie with a Land, *Hos.* 4. 1, 2, 3. and makes him swear their ruine, as here, *vers.* 14. 'Tis an eating up and devouring of men, *Psal.* 14. 4. *Micah* 3. 2, 3. and therefore oppressors are called, Dogs, Wolves, Bears, Lions, &c. (as I have shewed elsewhere) 'Tis a death far more merciless than present slaying, as hanging in chains alive is worse than beheading.

See more against oppression, in Mr. *Dent's* Pathway. p. 197, to 215. See my Com. on Psal. 82. 4. Obs. 6. p. 121, 122.

4. *Wicked men are all for themselves.*

They devour the poor, they swallow up the needy, they destroy their habitations, they inclose all, that they may dwell alone in the earth. A woe is set upon the head of such, *Isa.* 5. 8. such covetous Cormorants destroy all; In the body natural, if some members should draw all the nourishment to themselves, the whole body must needs perish. Piety makes men publick-spirited, and to seek the good of others as well as of themselves, *Act.* 13. 36. *Philip.* 2. 4, 29, 30. but Impiety is all for *self*, *Phil.* 2. 21.

Against Inclosures, see Mr. *Rob. Bolton* on Self-examination. p. 237, &c.

5. *Poor men many times are meek and humble men.*

The word *Gnani*, which we render afflicted and poor, signifies also humble and meek, *Zach.* 9. 9. As riches usually make men cruel and proud, so afflictions make men humble and meek. 'Tis not sufficient that men are humbled passively, against their wills, but they must be humble, actively; not low, but lowly. Our poverty and affliction should drive us

out of our selves to God, *Psal.* 12. 5. 1 *Pet.* 2. 23. Happy are those that are not only corrected, but thus taught by them, *Psal.* 94. 12.

Verse 5.

Saying, when will the New-Moon be gone, that we may sell Corn? and the Sabbath, that wee may set forth Wheat, making the Ephah small, and the Shekel great, and falsifying the ballances by deceit?

IN the two subsequent verses the Prophet shews how they devoured the poor, *viz.* by their unrighteousness and covetousness, which appeared in that they were so greedy of gain, that they thought all time lost which was spent in Gods worship, because it brought no present, visible profit with it; and therefore they angrily cry, *When will the New-Moon be gone, that wee may sell Corn? &c.* God had set apart many festivals in the time of the Law for his own worship, but especially the weekly Sabbath, and the New-Moons; hence we finde them so often joyned together in Scripture, *Isa.* 1. 13. & 66. 23. *Hos.* 2. 11. *Col.* 2. 16. Though they had many other solemnities, yet those came about but seldome, as once a year, or the like, and therefore they did not so oft molest them as these did; hence they exclaim principally, and by name against these frequent feasts. The *New-Moon* was the Calends or first day, and beginning of every month, and was consecrated to the Lord. It signified that all the seasons and months of the year are made holy and good unto us. On these New-Moons the Priests called the people together by sound of Trumpet to the holy Assemblies, *Numb.* 10. 10. *Psal.* 81. 4. and spent the time religiously in Prayer, Hearing Gods Word, and other holy exercises, 2 *King.* 4. 23. 2 *Chron.* 2. 4. & 8. 12, 13. *Neh.* 10. 33. *Ezra* 3. 5. *Ezek.* 45. 17. At this solemnity was offered in sacrifice, two young Bullocks, one Ramme, seven Lambs, three tenth deals of floure, *Numb.* 28. 11, to 16.

Interrogatio indignantis & optantis, q. d. nimium diu durant feriæ. Piscat.

V. Hospinian. de Orig. Festor. c. 4. mihi p. 15.

See more in *weemse* on the Ceremon Law, chap. 22. p. 100.

In this verse we have the covetous mans character set forth to the life, where we may see 1. His Irreligion towards God; He is a violator of Gods Sabbaths, at least in his affection, which denominates the man. The duties of Gods Sabbath

are

are a burden to him, he longs to have them over, he thinks such daies come too thick, and that they hinder his profit; and therefore he prophanely cryes, *When will they be gone?*

2. Here is their oppression and unrighteousness set forth four waies; 1. *They corrupted the measures*, they sold by a small measure, yet made the price great. *They diminish the Ephah*, and made it small, contrary to the Law, *Levit.* 19.35, 36. It should have been a just measure, neither too big, nor too small, *Ezek.* 45. 10. The *Ephah* was the tenth part of an Homer, containing about an English Bushel, *Levit.* 5. 11. & 19. 36, 1 *Sam.* 1. 24. & 17. 17. *Isa.* 5. 20. *Ezek.* 45. 10, 11. 'Twas an usual known measure of dry things amongst the Jews; as the Bath was of liquid things, under it by a Synecdoche all other measures are comprehended; for as St. *James* saith of the Commandements, he that breaks one, breaks all habitually and dispositively; so he that makes no conscience of corrupting one measure, will make no conscience of corrupting them all when a temptation comes. He that will falsifie an Ephah, I will not trust him with an Homer, which was the greatest measure of dry things, which the Jews had, containing about ten Bushels, *Ezek.* 45. 11.

2. A second branch of their Oppression was, *Their making of the Shekel great*, before they curtailed the measure, and now they heightned the price; thus they ground the Poor as it were between millstones, the upper was the small Ephah, and the lower was the great Shekel; they used great weights, to weigh the mony which they received for payment; for the Shekel was partly a peece of money, and partly a weight, By the *Shekel* here is meant the weight of the Shekel, the common, ordinary Shekel was in value about fifteen pence, and the Shekel of the Sanctuary two shillings six pence, as you may see, *Gen.* 23. 15. *Josh.* 7. 21. 1 *Sam.* 17. 5, 7. & 2 *Sam.* 21. 16. 2 *Chron.* 3. 9. As under the *Ephaph* was comprehended all kinde of measures, so under the *Shekel* is comprehended all kind of weights by the like Synecdoche; for he that is unfaithful in that which is little, will be unfaithful in that which is much. In those daies they did not count their mony, but they weighed it. Now, although

Siclus apud Hebræos fuit genus nummi simulq; ponderis. Ravanel. in V. Siclus, ubi plura.

Siclus fuit moneta certi ponderis, & omnium ponderum regula. 'Twas the weight of all things ponderous, and commonly weighable amongst them. See *Weemse* Vol. 1. page 142. *in fine lib.*

though

though the measure was little, yet the price of the Corn was great; they gave light measure, but heavy weights, when they came to pay their mony, contrary to Gods express commandement, *Deut.* 25. 13, 14, 15. *Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small, &c.*

3. Yet more, *They falsifie the ballances by deceit*, Either in weighing mony, or other commodities, or as the Original runs, they pervert the ballances of deceit, *viz.* by making those which were right deceitful. They falsified the weights, the better to defraud others. They raised themselves out of other mens ruines, and got profit by their disprofit. Thus they gained, whether by right or by wrong, they cared not. *Rem, Rem, quocunque modo rem.* They must have mony, 'tis no matter how.

Gnivvet, pervertit, curvitatem quandam & perversitatem deviantem à recto denotat.

4. They were not onely deceitful, but cruel too, *vers.* 6. they bought the poor for things of nought, and made slaves of them; before they got their Mony, Lands and Estates (for in time of famine men will part with all for bread) and now they get the men too; and (which aggravates their sin to the heighth) they did not onely corrupt their measures, and falsifie their weights, but their wares too. *They sold the refuse of the Wheat*; They sold the chaff, refuse and base commodities, yet made them pay for good ones. No wonder if the Lord swear their destruction, *vers.* 7.

The summe of all is this, *When shall we have done with these solemn Feasts, and times allotted for publick worship, wherein we are forbidden to buy or sell? would to God those New-Moons and Sabbaths were once over, that wee might sell our Corn at an high rate, making the measure of the Wheat small, and the weights (wherewith the silver is weighed) great and heavy, thus falsifying the sale by deceitful weights.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Worldly men are weary of Gods worship.*

They think every hour ten, and every day a year, which hinders them in the pursuit of their worldly profits and pleasures. Their wealth is their treasure, and their money their God; and therefore Sabbaths to them are tiresome, tedious things, because they savour not the things of God, but the things

See more in Mr. *Trapps* Com. on Amos 8. 5.

things of the world. These snuff at Gods service, and cry, What a wearinesse is this? *Mal.* 1. 13. their bodies may be in the Temple, but their souls be in the Stable, or Barn, plodding on their gain and increase. They are somewhat akin to that Heathen, which complained of the Christians for losing a seventh part of their time in keeping Gods Sabbaths. This shewes the woful depravation of our natures, that can sit at a Play, or the like prophane meeting, a whole day without wearinesse; when Gods Worship, which should be our joy, is tedious and irksome, and we can hardly sit out an hour without sleeping; which shewes our grosse insensiblenesse of those Spiritual blessings revealed in the Gospel. But a gracious soul, who knowes what it is to enjoy communion with God in his Ordinances, calls the Sabbath *his delight*, and looks upon it as the best day in the Week, and esteems it an honourable day, *Isa.* 58. 13. because it brings him in great treasure. Those times which bring a man in great profit, are valued most. Rich men think not the time lost in which they are counting money; so a gracious soul so long as it hath incomes from God is greatly delighted, and longs to meet with God again, and therefore cries with *David*, *Oh when shall I come and appear before the Lord in Sion?* Psal. 42. & 84.

2 *Greedy worldlings are never at rest.*

These Muck-worms are alwaies seeking after gain, *Amos* 2. 7. *Hab.* 2. 13. so eagerly are they set upon it, that if they lose but an hour they think it ten. They are never well but when they are fingering of Money, serving Mammon, and laying up Treasure, *Luke* 12. 17, 18, 19. and this brings them into temptations and snares, and many hurtful lusts, which drown men in perdition, 1 *Tim.* 6. 9, 10. Lust is a furious thing, like *Jehu* it drives fiercely and furiously, *Jer.* 2. 23, 24, 25. 1 *Cor.* 12. 2. it will not let men rest worke-day nor Holy-day; all is one with these greedy Mammonists, their Money is their god, and whatever hinders them in the pursuit of it, is a great burden to them. This makes them cry here, *When will the New moon be gone that we may sell corn?* and this greedy lust puts them likewise upon Lying, swearing, Usury, Bribery, Perjury, Forgery, and what not? so sad it is to be in thraldome to a lust; there is no rest nor peace to such wicked ones, saith the Lord.

3 We must not confine the Worship of God only to the Sabbath-Day.

God enjoyned the *Jews* New-Moons, and other Festivals wherein to Worship him, as well as on the Sabbath. At those seasons they resorted to the Prophets to be instructed in the wayes of God, 2 *King* 4. 23. *Ezek.* 46. 1. especially when the Priests were dumbe and idle. The Sabbath-Day is the chief time to seek after knowledge, yet he appoints other seasons also; and if Ministers must preach in season and out of season on the Lords Day, and the Week day, as occasion requires; then surely people ought to hear at such seasons: and therefore it was Prophesied of Gospel-times, that Gods people should then be willing in that day of Christs power, *Psal.* 110. 3. and shall be constant and frequent in his Worship, *Isa.* 66. 23.

See more in my Com. on 2 Tim. 4. 2. p. 326.

4 Unrighteous dealing in our civil Commerce is very displeasing unto God.

He loves righteousness, but hates unrighteousness, *Psal.* 11. *ult.* and therefore so oft forbids it, *Levit.* 19. 11, 35, 36. *Deut.* 25. 13, 14, 15, 16. *Ezek.* 45. 10, 11. and tells us, that false weights and false ballances are an abomination to him, *Prov.* 11. 1. & 20. 10. & 23. 11. *Amos* 8. 7. *Hos.* 12. 7. and that he will be avenged on such as defraud others, 1 *Thes.* 4. 6. They shall not reign long here, *Ezek.* 22. 27, 12. *Micah* 2. 2, 3. not come into Gods kingdom hereafter, *Psal.* 15. 1, 2. 1 *Cor.* 6. 8, 9.

See more in my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 3. p. 81, 82. Mr. *Lever* Directory, on 1 Cor. 7. 30. Ser. 8. 9. p. 65. *Perkins* on Mat. 7. 2. p. 199.

Verse 6.

That we may buy the poor for Silver, and the needy for a pair of Shoes; and sell the refuse of the wheat.

THe Prophet goes on, and sets forth another kind of cruelty, used by these deceitful men; and that was, buying of the poor. This was the end of their fore-going fraud and unrighteous practices, *viz.* that they might drive the poor into those straits, that they should be forced to sell themselves as Slaves and Bond-men for a little silver and support. Those greedy ones had got their Purses before, and now have at their Persons, they will make Drudges of them.

In this Verse we have, 1. The object of these Commo-

rants

rants cruelty, and that is the Poor. It is not the Rich; for the Famine seldome pincheth them. Neither is their aime at the poor mans Goods and Cattel (for these they had got before) but now their aime is at their persons; though they were their brethren, and fellow-Citizens, yet having them at a bay now Corn was dear, they resolve to make Merchandize of them, and to buy and sell them at very low rates.

See the words, *Dal*, and *Ebion*, *tenuis & egenus*, opened at large, in my Com. on Psal. 82. 3. p. 106, 108.

2 It is not simply the Poor, but the Righteous, humble, honest, innocent poor which they thus oppress, *Amos* 2. 6. *They sell the righteous for silver.*

Humilem pro calceamentis Versio Arabic.

3 Here is the price which they give for these poor, and that is base and contemptible, *it is a little Silver, or a pair of shoes.* So *Amos* 2. 6. there they sell the righteous (as here they bought them) and his righteous cause for money, and the poor that could not bribe them, *for a pair of shoes.* The Lord permitted the *Jews* in some cases of extreme poverty to buy their poor brethren, but they most cruelly abused the Law, to the oppressing and grinding of the poor and needy, *Levit.* 25. 39, 40. whereas the Lord commanded, that though their poor Brethren were sold to them, or had sold themselves, yet they should not deal harshly or rigorously with them, as they did with Slaves, but civilly and tenderly as with brethren. This buying and selling of the poor *for a pair of Shoes*, notes the base estimation that worldlings have of poor righteous men, in that they buy and sell them at such mean, low, and sordid rates; even for the basest necessaries, for worthless things of little price.

Pro pari calceorum; i. e. *pro rebus vilissimis*; 1. *Quia vili æstimantur.* 2. *Quia sine ullo fere impendio comparantur*; 3. *Quia abjecta, utpote quæ calcantur perpetuò pedibus, neque unquam elevantur è pulvere & fimo. Hieron. in locum.*

4 To their former fraud they now adde another, that so they might fill up the measure of their sin. *They sell the refuse of the Wheat.* Before they corrupted and falsified their Weights, and now they corrupt their Wares. They sell the Chaff or falling off of the Wheat (as it is in the fountain) that is, they sell to the poor in their great necessity that which is Horse-meat, and Hogs-meat, rather than Mans-meat, even the refuse, offall, and tayl-end (as we say) which is mixt with Chaff, Cockle, light-corn, little-stones, and dust.

Mappal bar, decidium tritici, i. e. purgamenta & quisquilias, quæ è cribro dum concutitur, decidunt. Sanctius.

This refuse which is not marketable, and is seldome sold, but is usually given to Beasts or Birds, yet these Muckworms sell this Muck for pure Grain to the Poor, who were necessitated to buy this, or starve, and make them pay as if it were good corn.

This accumulated cruelty, makes the Lord to swear their ruine in the next verse.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Worldly men are very industrious for Mammon, and riches.*

They move every stone for the attaining of it, and care not how they come by it, whether by right or by wrong; on the Lords Day (though their hands be tied, yet) their hearts are on it, and on the week-days. 1. They get false Weights. 2. False Wares. 3. They inhance the price of those Wares. 4. They get not only the poor mans Purse, but his Person too. Thus they that will be rich fall into many snares and temptations of the Devil, which drown men in perdition, 1 *Tim.* 6. 9, 10. and if men be so violent for earth, what should we bee for Heaven?

2. *Life is a precious thing.*

Men will sell their Cattel, their Cloathes, their Children, yea themselves for food to preserve life, *Gen.* 47. 20, 23. 25. *Nehem.* 5. 2, 3, 4. so true is that, *Job* 2. 4. *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life.* It is a Proverbiall speech, some by skin understand a mans cloathing, which at first was made of Skins, *Gen.* 3. 21. 9. d. a man will part with his Cloathes rather than with his Life, for the body is more than raiment, *Mat.* 6. 26. 2. Others by *Skin for skin* understand riches, goods, and all the outward estate, which are like a Skin to cover and fence us from poverty and misery; but life is better than all these, and hath been greatly prized by *good men*, Gen. 32. 11. Hest. 7. 3. and *bad men*, Gen. 25. 32. Hest. 7. 7. Eccles. 9. 4.

See more in M. *Caryl* on Job 2. 4.

3 *Covetous men are cruel men.*

They buy and sell not only Cattel, but men, *Neh.* 9. 37. yea righteous men, *they sell the righteous for silver*, and condemn the just for a reward, *Jam.* 5. 6. any thing for money. Sell a

Boy

Boy for a Lust, and a Girl for a cup of Wine, *Joel* 3. 3. Some men will transgresse for an handful of Barley, or a morsel of Bread, *Ezek.* 13. 19. Thus the poor alwayes pay for it, especially the meek and modest poor; men are apt to goe over the Hedge where it is lowest, and to catch the poor by drawing them into their Nets, *Psal.* 10. 9. that is, into their Debt-books, that they may mortgage all unto them, and at last become their slaves and bond-men. As the good man considers the case of the poor and needy that he may be the fitter to releeve him, *Psal.* 41. 1. so these merciless men consider the poor, that they may devour him.

4 *Men may not debase a Commodity, depriving it of its primitive goodness, and then sell it for the best, at a full value.*

Corn-masters may not cull out the best Grain, nor mingle their Grain with refuse, and then sell it (as they did here) for the best. We may not mingle Wine with Water, nor Drosse with Silver, but whatever we would that men should doe to us (in equity and justice) even so must we doe unto them.

5 *The world hath a very mean esteeme of the godly.*

They value them no more than their old Shoes, and therefore they sell the righteous for a pair of Shoes; as if any contemptible rate were good enough for them. See how different the judgement of this wicked world is from the Judgement of God. The world esteeme the godly as the drosse and dung, the filth and off-scouring of the world, 1 *Cor.* 4. 13. but God esteemes them as the glory of the world, *Isa.* 4. 5. the only excellent ones of the earth, *Psal.* 16. 3. he thinketh them too good to live in this wicked ungrateful world, *Heb.* 11. 38.

See my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 3. p. 113, &c. and Mr. *Burroughs* on Psal. 16. 3. See Mr. *Fenners* Sert. on Heb. 11. 38.

6 *Cruelty ends in misery.*

God threatens these Men-sellers, and Men-devourers with dreadful Judgements, *Amos* 2. 6. & 8. 7. *Luke* 16. 24. *James* 2. 13. Though the poor bear it, yet God will not alwayes bear it at their hands, but swears he will be avenged on them, for so it follows.

See more before on ver. 4. Obs. 3.

Ver. 7.

The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, surely I will never forget any of their works.

WEE are now come to the Third Part of this Chapter, where the Judgements of God both Corporal and Spiritual are more fully set forth unto us.

1 The Prophet shewes the certainty of these Judgements, in that the Lord doth not only say, but sweare that he will bee avenged on them.

2 As they had been great Sinners, so he sets forth the greatness of their Punishment, *It shall overflow the Land like a mighty flood*, vers. 8.

3 As he had shewed the certainty, so he sets forth the suddenness of their sorrows, *There light shall be turned into darkness, and that at noon-day; their mirth into mourning*, and their high prosperity into the lowest misery, *vers.* 9, 10.

4 As if all this were not sufficient: he yet goes higher, and threatens them with a Famine, not of *Bread*, but which is worse, *of the Word of God*. As Spiritual Mercies are the choycest Mercies, so Spiritual Judgements are the sorrest Judgements.

5 Which strikes all dead, He tells them that this their loss should be irreparable. *They shall fall, and shall never rise any more*, vers. 14. We have heard of *Israels* Sin, now followes his Suffering; and least any should flatter themselves, and think that these Threatnings were but Scare-crows, therefore the Prophet the better to awaken those secure Sinners, brings in the Lord swearing their destruction, q. d. *As sure as I live*, (*saith the Lord*) *as sure shall the day*. This Oath of God notes both the certainty and immutability of Gods Counsell, and Decree to punish *Israel*; where we have,

1 The certainty of *Israels* ruine, *The Lord hath not only said, but sworn it*; that is, he hath most certainly decreed it, for Gods Oath is nothing else but Gods immutable Decree, sworne to punish these cruell Gaytiffs, and Oppressors of the poor.

2 By whom doth the Lord swear? why *it is by the excellency*

and

and eminency of Jacob; that is, by himself, who is the glory and excellency of *Israel*; and by whose favour and free-election they excelled all the Nations of the world. Other Nations had dead Idol-gods, but it was *Israels* glory above all the Nations of the World, that they had the Lord for their God, and were in Covenant with him. The Lord hereby tacitly upbraids them for their ingratitude, that having such glorious priviledges from him, they should yet rebel against him.

Some *by the excellency of Jacob*, understand the Ark, and others the Temple; it is true, these are called, *The glory of Israel*; but since the Lord hath no greater to swear by, therefore he swears by himself, who is here called, *The Excellency of Jacob*, i. e. of his people *Israel*.

The Vulgar leaving the Fountain, and following the corupt streams of the Septuagint, render it thus, *The Lord hath worn against the pride of Jacob*. But the Original is expresse gainst it, for though the word *Gaon* signifie Pride, as well as xcellency, yet the prefix *Beth*, notes that form of swearing hich is usual with the *Hebrews*, as appears *Amos* 4. 2. & 6. 8. ad it signifies not *contra*, but *per*, and therefore is fitly ren-ed, *By the excellency of Jacob*, and not against the pride *Israel*.

Bigaon, per excellentiam, celsitudinem, gloriam. V. Leigh Crit. Hebr. p. 33. ubi plurima. Si, est nota juranti, & signum juramenti execratorii apud Hebraos.

3 What doth the Lord swear? why he swears *he will forget none of their wicked workes*; the words in the Original run us, *If I forget any of their works for ever, q. d.* let me not ve, or let me not be God, or let me not be accounted true, t repute me for a Liar, if ever I forget to punish this great ckedness of *Israel*, they shall surely pay for it according to eir demerits. See the like expression, *Deut.* 1. 35. 1 *Sam.* 14. & 14. 45. *Psal.* 89. 36. *Isa.* 14. 24. & 62. 8. *Ezek.* . 8. The Prophet by an Euphemismus omits that open form swearing, *As I live, or as sure as I am God, &c.* because of horror and dreadfulnesse of it, and to make us tender of u-3 Imprecations, therefore the Holy Ghost oft times conceals Imprecation in swearing.

This abrupt manner of speaking is usual in Oathes; it is a d of Aposiopesis usual in Scripture, when we cut off some d, or part of a sentence which yet is understood; such hes *cum reticentia* are ve[illegible] readful, and set forth Gods greatest

Reticentia est plena affectus & terroris.

greateſt Wrath against a People; as *Pſal.* 95. 11. *To whom I ſware in my wrath, if they enter into my reſt.* &c. They ſhall never enter into my reſt; if ever they come there let me not be God, or let me not be true. It is a very ſtrong Negation, a ſtronger cannot be expreſſed. *I will never forget any of their works.* It is an Anthropopathy, God ſpeaks to men after the manner of men; he is ſaid to remember thoſe ſins which hee puniſheth, and to forget thoſe ſins which he pardoneth.

Lanaſath, in finem, in æternum, in perpetuum.

Any of their works; i. e. None of their works, not one ſhall be forgotten by me to all eternity, but they ſhall certainly and ſuddenly pay for all their crying Crimes committed againſt mee.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Sin and ſorrow are inſeparable companions.*

Flagitium & flagellum, are like the Needle and the Thread, the one goes before, and the other follows, *Iſa.* 63. 10. 1 *Cor.* 10. 8. 9. 10. we read before of *Iſraels* Sin, and now we read of his Suffering; and to aſſure them of it, The Lord ſwears it. If men will ſin againſt the Lord, let them be ſure at firſt or laſt their ſin will finde them out, *Numb.* 32. 23. Gods Word had been ſufficient to aſſure us of this, but becauſe we are incredulous, he confirms it with an Oath, that none might doubt of it. Ask Men and Angels, Houſes, Cities, Kingdoms, and they will all tell you, that it was ſin that laid them in the duſt.

2 *A People may ſo far incenſe the Lord to wrath by their ſins, that hee may ſwear their ruine.*

When *Iſrael* had long hardned their hearts againſt God, at laſt he ſwears they ſhould never enter into his reſt, *Pſal.* 95. 11. Patience abuſed turns into fury, and makes the Lord to ſwear mens utter rejection, 1 *Sam.* 15. 28, 29. this people had highly provoked the Lord, and therefore this is the third time which the Lord ſwears againſt them, *Amos* 4. 2. & 6. 8.

3 *The favour and preſence of God with a People, is the glory and excellency of a people.*

It is not Corn, Wine, Women, Health, Wealth, or multitudes of people that make a Nation happy, for then *Turks*, and

and *Tartars*, *Barbarians*, and *Indians* should excell Gods People, for they abound with these external comforts; but *happy is that people whose God is the Lord*, Psal. 144. ult. Hence the Lord is called, *The excellency of Jacob*, and *the Glory of Israel*. He was their inestimable Treasure, and true Honour, who made them truly glorious, *Psal.* 106. 20. & 148. 14. *Jer.* 2. 11. *Luke* 2. 32. Hence *Moses* glories in this above all other Priviledges, That *there was no people that had the Lord their God so nigh unto them in all that they called upon him for, as the Lord our God hath been to them*, Deut. 4. 7, 8. The Wife shines with the rayes of her Husband, *Ezek.* 16. 14. the fruition and enjoyment of Gods favour is the life of our lives, and the honour of our honours, without this we may write *I-chabod* upon all that we have, *There is no glory*. The greater is their sin then who dishonour him by their sin, who is their real excellency, and turn the glory which he hath put upon them into shame. This makes the Lord to swear that he will strip them of their Priviledges, and make them naked, as in the day when they were born. He will take away not only his Corn and Wine, but his Sabbaths, and Sacraments, which are the real glory of a people, and give them to a people which shall yeeld him better obedience.

See my Com. on Psal. 73. 25.

4 *Oathes are tremendous and dreadful things.*

They must be taken with abundance of fear and reverence. Hence it is that the Holy Ghost here conceals the Imprecation, implying thereby, that men should tremble at the very thoughts of what will follow if they swear falsly.

5 *God records and remembers all the wickednes of the wicked.*

He forgets none, no not one of their works, though they themselves do. As hee hath a book of remembrance for all the good which his people have done, which shall at the last Day be publisht to their everlasting praise, *Mal.* 3. 16. *Mat.* 25. 34, 35. so he hath a book of remembrance for all the wicked works of the ungodly, which shall be opened at the last Day, and set in order before them to their everlasting shame, *Psal.* 50. 21. *Mat.* 25. 41, 42. then shall they give an account of their Stewardship, and must be no longer Stewards, *Luke* 16. 2. nothing can pass his All-seeing-Eye; hee records not some, but All their works; and though he may

See my Com. on Hos. 13. 12. Obs. 1.

seem for a time to connive and take no notice of their sins, but lets them prosper in their wickedness; yet at last he will make them know that he hath not forgot any of their works, when he shall execute his Justice fully upon them.

VERSE 8.

Shall not the Land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? and it shall rise up wholly as a flood, and it shall be cast out, and drowned as by the flood of Ægypt.

THe Prophet having in the precedent Verse shewed the *certainty* of *Israels* punishment, in this Verse he comes to shew the greatness and grievousness of that misery which like a flood was rushing in upon them. They had been extraordinary sinners, and now he tells them of extraordinary sufferings. They had their floods of sin, and now follow floods of sorrow. The Prophet the better to awaken them begins, 1. With an Emphatical Interrogation, which is equivalent to a strong Affirmation, as *Amos* 5. 20. *Shall not the Land tremble for this?* *viz.* for this cruelty, cozening, Idolatry, and Apostasie? *q. d.* I appeal to your Consciences, how can it be othe. wise? it is impossible that such men as have thus perverted all equity and order, have brought in confusion, and exercised all manner of Tyranny and cruelty upon the poor, should ever escape unpunished; when the very *earth trembles* and groans under such lewd and rebellious inhabitants.

Tirgaz a Radaz contremuit, commotus est.

1. Some make it a Prosopopeical speech, thus, so great is the sin, and so great shall be the sorrow of *Israel*, that the very insensible earth cannot but tremble and be moved at it; for all Creatures by a Natural instinct are sensible of the Voyce and beck of their Creator, how much more of his anger.

2. Here is an Exegesis, or explanation of the precedent Clause, the earth should so tremble, and there should be such trouble and fears there, *that every one that dwells in it should mourn.* As all had sinned, so all without exception should suffer for sin.

3. He illustrates their Calamity yet further, by the similitude of an over-flowing *flood*, which carries down all before it, *and*

and it shall rise up wholly as a flood. The earth shall rise up as a flood, for, the flood should rise up over it; it is an Hypallage frequent in Scripture, *q. d.* As waters rise up and cover the Land that it doth not appear; so shall the *Assyrians* arise and over-spread the whole Land of *Israel*, and carry away both them and their riches.

And it shall be cast out; As the Sea and Floods doe cast out mire and dirt, which they raise, *Isa.* 57. 20. so should the Land spue out these; yet more, *and be drowned as by the flood of Ægypt*; that is, by the River *Nilus*, which by way of eminency is called, *The River*, i. e. that noted and famous River which watered the Land of *Ægypt*, making it fat and fruitful.

Nisen, demergetur, in profundum, They shall be swallowed up as in a gulph.

Israels Captivity is here compared to an over-flowing River, which no banks nor bounds can hold. It is usual in Scripture to set forth great Calamities by the name of great Waters; so *Psal.* 18. 16. & 32. 6. & 69. 2, 15. & 124. 4, 5. & 144. 7. *Jer.* 46. 7, 8. *Amos* 9. 5. So the Lord here, the better to expresse the great Calamities which were coming upon *Israel*, fetcheth a Similitude from the River *Nilus*, which was wont yearly to over-flow the Plains of *Ægypt*; there was no raine ordinarily in *Ægypt*, but the over-flowing of *Nilus* supplied that want, and covered the Plains for about two months space. Now as the River *Nilus* over-flowed all the Land of *Ægypt*, and made it like a Sea, so the Land of *Israel* should be swiftly and suddenly over-run with the Army of the *Assyrians*, which like a sweeping flood should carry away all before them; as they did in the reign of *Hoshea*, the last King of *Israel*, when they were carried into Captivity out of their owne Land, 2 *King.* 17.

V. Pliny, Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 9.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *The very earth trembles and groans under the sins of wicked men.*

Wicked men are a burden to the whole Creation, *Psal.* 60. 1, 2. *Rom.* 8. 22. and could they speak (as they doe tacitly, and in their kind) they would say, Lord let us not be Servants to those that will not be Servants to thee. The earth cries, let me devour them, as I did *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*,

V. Fenners Ser. on Rom. 8. 22. p. 296. folio.

Numb. 16. 31, 32. The Sea cryes, Let me drown them; the Air saith, Let me choak them, &c. This all creatures are ready to testifie their indignation against sin and sinners, and therefore the Lord calls so oft upon the inanimate creatures to be ashamed and astonished at the rebellion of his people, *Isa.* 1. 2. *Jer.* 2. 12. As a man, whose stomach is surcharged, is sick till he hath vomited up that which burdens his stomach; so the creature is even sick again till it have spued out those wicked inhabitants that burden it, *Levit.* 18. 25. & 20. 22. Now, shall the insensible creatures groan for our sin, and shall not we groan for our selves? shall they be affected with our wickedness, and we be insensible? God forbid.

2. *Wicked men are the troublers of* Israel.

The world is apt to charge Gods people with rebellion and troubling of *Israel*. As *Ahab* did *Elijah*, and *Amaziah* the Priest did *Amos*, *chap.* 7. 10. and the Jews the Apostles, *Acts* 17. 6. But tis the wicked that are the true Reshaghims and troublers of the places where they dwell, *Jer.* 4. 28. & 9. 12, 13. *Hos.* 4. 3. 'Tis the Idolater, the Oppressor, the Cheater, &c. that are the true troublers of *Israel*, and make the Land to tremble under them.

See my Beauty of Holiness, ch. 7. Obj. 11.

3. *Floods of sin bring floods of sorrow.*

Where floods of Idolatry, Atheism, Security, and Unrighteousness go before, there floods of misery ever follow. In the old world there was a deluge of sin, which brought upon them a deluge of water, which swept them all away. God hath variety of floods to sweep away impenitent sinners from the earth.

4. *When Judgements come, they seize on rich men as well as on others.*

When the flood of Gods judgements comes, *every man shall mourn*, without exception. Not one of these covetous Cormorants shall escape; their silver and their gold shall not avail them in the day of Gods wrath, *Prov.* 11. 4. *Ezek.* 7. 19, 27. *Zeph.* 1. *ult.* The sin of such Oppressors, cryes, and rests not till it hath brought plagues upon the heads of such sinners, *Ezek.* 16. 49. & 22. 7, 13. *James* 5. 4. Thus as they had sinned universally, so now God brings upon them universal destruction.

VERS.

VERSE 9.

And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, that I will cause the Sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day.

WEE have seen *Israels* sin and sorrow in part, here we have it more fully amplified. 1. Their prosperity shall be turned into misery, and their mirth into mourning, *vers.* 9, 10.

2. They shall lose their Pastors and their Preaching and shall have a famine of spiritual food sent amongst them, *vers.* 11, 12.

3. Then follows utter destruction, *vers.* 13, 14.

The Prophet Allegorically sets forth under elegant Metaphors, the greatness of that sorrow which was falling upon *Israel*; *Their light should be turned into darkness*; their joy into sorrow, their prosperity into adversity, their feasts into mourning, and their songs into lamentation, as for an only Son.

Israel had injoyed a little gleam of prosperity which they thought would alwaies last; they thought this Sun would never set, nor this light ever be darkened, but the Lord tells them, he would suddenly send the Army of the *Assyrians* upon them, when they little dreamed of it, so that their Sun should set at noon, and the light be turned into sudden darkness.

Some take the words literally, that the natural Sun should set at noon, but the Prophet speaks not of natural, but metaphorical darkness, *viz.* of the night of adversity, as appears by that which follows, *I will darken the earth in the clear day*, what's that? why I will turn your feasts into mourning, &c. *vers.* 10.

Others apply this Text to the Passion of Christ, when the Sun was eclipsed, and darkness covered the face of the whole earth. But this is quite against the Text and Context, which speaks of the destruction of the Kingdome of *Israel*, and not of the sufferings of Christ.

In the verse it self we have 1. A dreadful judgement threatned in metaphorical terms, *I will cause your Sun to go down at noon, and will darken the earth in the clear day.* The same

thing is set forth in various terms, the better to affect them. By *Light and the Sun at noon*, is meant great prosperity and gladness, as 2. *Sam.* 23. 4. *Hos.* 8. 16. *Job* 18. 5, 6. & 28. 15. *Psal.* 97. 11. & 112. 4. By *darkness* is meant, great sorrow, terrour, captivity, and fear. So *Job* 22. 10, 11. *Isa.* 59. 9, 10. *Jer.* 15. 9. *Amos* 5. 18. *Micah* 3. 6. *Psal.* 107. 10. *Lam.* 3. 2. Hence the doleful condition of the damned in Hell is called by the name of darkness, *Matth.* 22. 13.

2. Here is the time when this shall be, and that is, *in that day, viz.* when the Lord shall come to execute judgement upon *Israel*, for all their provocations, and bring the Army of their enemies upon them.

3. Here is the certainty of all this misery, *Dixit Dominus*, The Lord, who cannot lye, hath spoken it. Let the wicked have never so much light of prosperity, let him shine as bright as *Lucifer*, yea as the Sun itself, which is the fountain of light, yet his light shall be put out in obscurity, and down he shall, *Jer.* 14. 13. The higher men are in their own conceits without God, the more suddenly and surely shall they fall.

The summe of all is this, *q. d.* *'Tis true O you people of* Israel, *that yet are now at the heights of your peace, and at the high-noone of your prosperity, now you are secure and flourishing by reason of those victories which you obtained under* Jeroboam *the second, who restored what was lost to* Israel: *now you trust in your Riches, Success, and Armies, and never once think of a fall, or that your Sun will set; but since I have spared you for a time, therefore you conclude that your judgements will never come, but I will bring sudden calamities upon you (saith the Lord) and such as you looked not for, so that your mid-day of prosperity shall be turned into the midnight of adversity; your peace into war, your plenty into penury, and your liberty into restraint: you shall be stript of all by the merciless* Assyrian; *and you that were but now the head, shall suddenly be made the heel: The Sun of your prosperity shall set in obscurity, without the least glimmering of light, or hope of deliverance.*

See my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. p. 148.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *All our afflictions come from God.*

'Tis he that makes our Sun to set at noon, when we are most

most careless and secure, and little think of night. 'Tis I, I, I, that create light and darkness, *Isa.* 45. 7. There is no evil of affliction in the City but the Lord doth it, *Amos* 3. 6. Hence they are called *His* Judgements by a special propriety, *Isa.* 26. 8, 9. and he is said to bring spoilers and sudden terrors upon his people at noon-day, *Jer.* 15. 8, 9. See Mr. *Brinsly* in his Treatise of Passive Obedience.

2. *The wicked may injoy for a time a great light of prosperity.*

It may be noon and clear day with them; They may prosper even to envy, *Psal.* 73. 2, 3, 4. *Jer.* 12. 1. *Hab.* 1. But of this at large elsewhere. See my Com. on Psal. 73. 18, &c.

3. *When the wicked are in highest prosperity, the Lord can suddenly bring upon them a night of adversity.*

When people are drunk with prosperity, and think their mountain so strong, that it can never be moved, then God usually hides his face; and we are presently in trouble, *Psal.* 30. 7. In our own dayes we have seen those that have been upon the highest pinnacle of temporal felicity, suddenly brought into an Abyss of misery. Before the day of judgement, when men are most secure, crying, Peace, Peace, then comes sudden and swift destruction. Be not then puft up with success, or prosperity, nor yet envy the triumphs of the wicked, for they shall soon come down, and wither as the grass, *Psal.* 37. 1, 2. *Rev.* 18. 7, 8. Walk humbly and thankfully in the midst of all enjoyments, do not fight against God with his own favours, nor abuse his blessings to his dishonour; if you do, you must know, that he who raised you, can as easily ruine you; and he that makes it noon with you, can as easily make it night. Let us therefore with holy *Job*, *cap.* 3. 25. in our highest prosperity, fear and fore-see a day of adversity. Let us become as an obedient people, and then our Sun shall never set, but we shall injoy Gods favour without interruption, *Isa.* 60. 20. See my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. Obs. 1. See Mr. *Bellars* his Sermon on Isa. 60. 20.

Verse

VERSE 10.

And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your Songs into Lamentation, and I will bring up Sackcloath upon all loyns, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning of an onely Son, and the end thereof as a bitter day.

WHat the Prophet had spoken metaphorically and darkly in the precedent verse, he comes and explains it in this. He had told them before that their Sun should set at noon; what's that, may some one say? why in plain English, *Your feasts shall be turned into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation.*

The Prophet goes on still in setting forth that sudden and sad distress, which should surprise *Israel*; and because wicked men are slow of heart to beleeve Gods threatnings, therefore he multiplies words, and expresseth the same thing in various terms, the better to awaken them, and work upon them.

In the two foregoing verses we had six *Ands*, and in this verse we have six more, which serve as so many links to fasten the chain of Gods judgements together. Whereunto have

1. A further explication of the judgement threatned; *viz. a turning of their feasts into mourning, and their songs into lamentation.*

Quest. *But the Question will be what songs and feasts doth the Prophet here speak of, whether be they sacred or prophane?*

Answ. Both. 1. The Lord would turn their common feasts where they had prophane singing and musick, into weeping and wailing, *Amos* 6. 5, 6, 7.

2. Their holy Feasts and Temple-Songs, and Musick, in which they so much delighted, and thought that with such Ceremonious, external worship God was well pleased, these did but increase Gods wrath, and blow up the fire of his displeasure against them, and therefore the Lord threatens that these songs especially should be turned into howling, *vers.* 3.

The Jews had many festivals, and in them God commanded them to rejoyce, *Deut.* 12. 18. They had also holy Musick, and holy songs at those festivals appointed by *David*, for the praising

ing of God, 1 *Chron.* 25. But they being Idolaters, Superstitious, and hypocritical, resting in a bare external performance of these Ceremonial Rites, and placing all holiness in them, though themselves lived lewdly and licentiously, *Jer.* 7. 8, 9, 10, 11. Sacrificing to the Calves, and not to God, therefore the Lord threatens to turn even those religious feasts and songs (for of these the Prophet seems more especially to speak) into mourning and lamentation, *q. d. Hitherto you have lived secure and careless, feasting and singing without any fear of God, or thoughts of his judgements; but now (saith the Lord) I will turn your feasting into fasting, and your songs into lamentation.*

2. Here is the greatness of their sorrow, set forth by two Ceremonial Rites, which were used in those Eastern Countries, *viz. Sackcloth and Baldness.*

1. *Sackcloth* was a course mourning garment, made of black Goats hair, bound with a girdle about their loyns. 'Twas a sign and symbole of misery and mourning, as appears, *Gen.* 37. 34. 2 *King.* 6. 30. *Psal.* 30. 11. *Isa.* 3. 24. & 25. 3. & 22. 12. *Jer.* 4. 8. & 48. 37. *Lam.* 2. 10. *Ezek.* 7. 18. *Joel.* 1. 8. At *Abners* funeral *David* commanded them to put on Sackcloth, and weep, 2 *Sam.* 3. 31. And *Ahab* hearing of Gods judgements coming on him, he humbled himself in *Sackcloth*, 1 *King.* 21. 27. The two witnesses were cloathed in Sackcloth, mourning to see so many fall away to Popery, *Rev.* 11. 3. The Lord threatens to make them put off their ornaments and gorgeous attire, *Exod.* 33. 4, 5. and put on sackcloth and mourning weeds, as most suitable to such mournful times. They would not humble themselves nor mourn in their prosperity, now they should be humbled, and made to mourn in their adversity.

See more in Mr. *Greenhill* on Ezek. 7. 18.

2. *Baldness* also was a sign of the greatest mourning among the Jews, and therefore the Lord threatens here that he would bring *baldness upon every head*; that is, their miseries should be so great, that they should pluck off the very hair of their heads for anguish and sorrow: for the Jews, when they were in deep distress, did testifie their sorrow, as by sackcloth and rending their garments; so by Baldness also, either pulling the hair off their heads for very anguish and indignation, as *Ezra* did *Ezra* 9. 3. or else shaving their heads and beards,

as Job did when he heard that his children were dead; this he did, not out of impatience, but according to the customs of those times and Countries, to express the greatness of his sorrow, *Job* 1. 20. So *Isa.* 3. 24. & 15. 2. *Jer.* 7. 29. & 16. 6. & 47. 5. and 48. 37. *Ezek.* 7. 18. and 27. 31. *Micah* 1. 16. The hair of the head and beard is reputed an Ornament, and the cutting it off was a debasement, and therefore it was used onely in cases of very great sorrow. Though they might not conform themselves to the Heathen, who shaved their heads, and then dedicated their locks to Idols, *Levit.* 19. 27, 28. *Deut.* 14. 1. yet in sorrow for sin, and deep distress, it was commanded, *Isa.* 22. 12. *Micah* 1. 16.

3. Here is the universality of this calamity, it shall seize upon *all tribes and every head*, none shall escape, but as all had sinned, so all should now suffer for sin.

4. Here is a further Amplification of their sorrow, drawn from the Example of one that mourns *for the death of an onely Son*, which is wont to be very bitter and great. The Prophet seems to be at a stand, as here, whence to borrow comparisons, to set forth the greatness of their sorrow. A Father which hath many children, dispenseth his love among them all, but he that hath but one onely Son, his love is united, and is more vehemently set upon him: hence *Unus amor est vehementior omnibus*, and the Philosopher saith, the strongest love is between two, not twenty; for if it be divided amongst many, 'tis lessened and weakened; as a River that is cut into many channels. When Parents lose one of many, it troubles them, but yet they comfort themselves that they have others left still, but if they have but one only Son, and he dye, to bury all their hopes in one onely hopeful childe, is very bitter, and causeth great lamentation. Hence great sorrow in Scripture is thrice compared to the *sorrowing for an onely Son.*

1. In the Text, then *Jer.* 6. 26. where the Prophet calling upon the people, to make most bitter lamentation for the great calamities which were coming on them, hee calls on them to *mourn as for an onely Son.*

So *Zach.* 12. 10. When the Jews shall be converted and called, 'tis said, *They shall look upon him whom they have pierced, they mourn of Faith, and shall mourn for him as for an only Son*, that is, in a high degree and measure. 'Tis a kinde

of

of Proverbial speech used by the Heathen. Hence that of Tully, I mourn (said he) for the misery of the Common-wealth, as a Mother doth for her only Son. *Cicero pro Rosc. Amerino.*

4 Here is the duration of this misery, it shall endure to the end of the Kingdome of *Israel*, and extend it self to their posterity. *The end thereof*, viz. of the Land, which is put for the inhabitants of the Land, by a frequent Metonymy, *shall be as a bitter day*; that is, as a funeral, mournful day, because they shall be destitute of all true comfort from the Word of God, which alone can keep us from perishing in our troubles, *Psalm* 119. 92.

The Prophet seems to prevent an evasion, and stop a gap at which impenitent sinners are wont to creep out; oh (say they) though these troubles be sharp, yet they will be but short, they are clouds that will soon vanish; but deceive not your selves (saith the Prophet) for the Wrath of God shall abide upon you, and upon your Posterity even to the end; and when one wave is over, another shall come, till it have swept you all out of your owne Land.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Plain preaching is the best teaching.*

The Prophet in this Verse expounds his Metaphors and allusions, and makes them plaine for the meanest capacity. But of this elsewhere. See my Com. on Hos. 13. 15. Obs. 2.

2 *What is dark in one place, the Scripture makes plaine in another.*

What was spoken mystically, *vers.* 9. is explained *ver.* 10. But of this elsewhere. Schools-Guide Rule 8.

3 *Carnal joy ends in sorrow.*

As they that sow in godly sorrow shall reap in joy; so they that sow in carnal joy shall reap in sorrow. When men abuse their feasts and lawful liberties, God will turn them into fasts and mourning, *Hos.* 2. 11. *Amos* 5. 16, 17. & 6. 5, 6, 7. & 8. 3.

How sad then is our condition, for if the Lord turn the feasts of his owne appointment into lamentation to a back-sliding people; what may we expect who are mad upon the *Saturnalia, Bacchanalia, & Floralia* of the Heathen, Festivals which God never

never once instituted or ordained, wherein men drink, dance, dally, and give themselves up to all manner of debauchery and prophaneness, and that in dayes of such glorious light, as the Nation never enjoyed the like since it was a Nation; shall not the Lord visit for these things? he will suddenly and certainly send some *Assrian* or other to avenge the dishonours done to his name. If the Lord will turn holy Feasts and Songs into lamentation, what will he doe to those that use prophane and filthy Songs, to the corrupting both of themselves and others?

4 *When all sin, all must look to suffer for sin.*

When all sin, then all loyns, and all heads must be made bald; National Sins bring National Judgements. When *All* the Old World, All *Sodome*, All *Jerusalem* had corrupted their wayes, then *All* must perish. But of this before.

5 *In calamitous times we may and must expresse our inward sorrow by outward Vestures and Gestures.*

When Gods hand lies heavie upon a people, they must not be stupid and stoical, but they must hear the Rod, and who hath appointed it, *Micah* 6. 9. They must humble themselves under Gods mighty hand, laying aside their costly attire, and put themselves in mourning weeds. It is not sufficient that we grieve inwardly for our sins, and Gods Judgements upon us for sin; but we must also expresse our sorrow by external signs. *David* wept and put on Sackcloth, *Psal.* 38. 11. and so did, *Jer. ch.* 9. 1. and *Nehem. ch.* 1. 4. *Job* abhorred himself, and repented in dust and ashes, *Job* 42. 6.

Caut. Yet a Caveat must be here entred, we must not rest in bare external weeping, or wearing of mournful Vestures; but our outward humiliation must expresse our inward humiliation of the heart, else hypocritical out-side service is odious to God, *Isa.* 1. 11, 12, 13. & 66. 3. *Matthew* 6. 2. *Luke* 16. 15.

See Burroughs on Mat. 11. 29. p. 652. and M. Poole's Ser. on Joh. 4. 24.

6 *Sin is a bitter thing.*

It is bitter in it self, and brings forth bitter effects. It brings bitter dayes, and bitter calamities upon a people; Sin, like Sathan its Father makes large promises, but sorry performances. It promiseth pleasure, but yeelds pain; it promiseth liberty, but brings men into prisons; it promiseth peace, but brings warre. Take heed then of the deceitfulnesse of sin, *Heb.* 3. 13.

See my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. Obs. 8.

See Brooks his remedy against Satans Devices p. 132. 134.

7. *When*

7 *When a Nation is ripe for ruine, God will utterly destroy them.*

His patience will no longer wait upon them, but they and theirs shall perish in their iniquity, *and the end shall be a bitter day.* The wicked use to promise themselves light, but they shall finde darknesse; they promise themselves deliverance and joy, but they shall finde bitternesse and sorrow even to the end of their dayes.

Verse 11, 12.

Behold, the days come saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the Land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.

And they shall wander from Sea *to* Sea, *and from the North even to the East, they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord, and shall not find it.*

THe Prophet had before set forth those sad Calamities, and external Miseries which should seize upon the ten Tribes; he now proceeds, and fore-tells them of farre greater evils which should come upon them, *viz.* not a famine of bodily bread (for of that he had spoken before, *Amos* 4. 6.) but a Spiritual famine of the Word of God, which should feed their souls to eternal life. This is the Judgement of Judgements, usually the last and sorest. As the giving of Gods Word to a People is the choysest Blessing, so the taking of it away is the heavieſt Curse; as having all other Curses attending it. It is a sign of Gods rejecting and reprobating of a people, when he will not vouchsafe to speak unto them by his Ministers. As it is a sign that God hath some people in that place to which hee sends his Messengers, *Acts* 18. 9, 10, 11. so their departure from a place and people is an evident sign of his displeasure against them, *Acts* 13. 46. *Mat.* 10. 14, 15.

In this Verse we have, 1. A note of Attention, *Behold*, q. d. I shall now tell you of a more direful and dreadful Judgement than ever, and therefore it concerns you diligently to attend.

2. Here is the Judgement threatned, and that is a *Famine*, which is amplified and illustrated by an Antithesis, it is not an

external, corporal famine, tis not a famine of material bread, but which is far worse, tis a spiritual famine, a losse of heavenly food, a want of the bread of life; this famine should be so great, that they should run from Sea to Sea, and from one part of the Land to another, and yet should not injoy it. The Lord in great mercy had sent his Prophets amongst them, to call them to repentance, but they like unthankful and rebellious sinners contemned Gods Ordinances, prophaned his holy things, and persecuted his Messengers, till the wrath of the Lord broke forth, and there was no remedy.

They loathed Gods Mannah, and longed to be at their Garlick and Onions in Egypt again. They were dead under lively Oracles, and barren under fruitful means of grace, and therefore the Lord was now resolved no longer to plow such Rocks, nor sow such sands; but since they would not serve him with gladness of heart in the abundance of all things, therefore they should now be made to serve their enemies in the want of all things. They that would not hear and obey the Prophets of God in their own Land, should now be cast out of all, and be made to serve strange gods in a strange Land. As God had before exalted them to Heaven in the use of means, and given them many excellent Prophets that did fully and faithfully dispense his Word unto them; so now, their Prophets should be taken from them, and they should have a spiritual famine, and be made to know the price of Gods mercies by the wanting of them. The word *Famine*, implies two things, 1. It sets forth the nature of Gods Word, tis the food of the soul: Look what bread and water is to the body, that, and much more is the Word of God unto the soul.

2. It imports the greatness of the judgement, it should be a *Famine*, not a famine of bread, that is but a petty judgement, a flea-biting, as nothing comparatively to this, though the bodily famine simply considered in it self, be one of Gods sore judgements; as I have shewed before, in *Amos* 4. 6. yet that pincheth but the out-side, the carkass; and may be sent in mercy to the soul: but this famine of the Word is a spiritual judgement that devours the soul, and is a sign of Gods great wrath against a people, and is usually accompanied with many other judgements.

Here is the Author of this famine, and that is God, I will

willfond, or I will let it loose, I have hitherto chained it up like a wilde beast, that it might not hurt you, but now it shall out amongst you and destroy you. *Shalach, misit, emisit, immisit.*

4. Here is the time when this should be, and that is suddenly, *The dayes come*, *q. d.* The time will come, and is now at hand, when your Sun shall set at noon, and a spiritual famine shall surprise you.

5. Here is the certainty of all this, 'Tis not man, but *the Lord that saith it*, who will fulfil every threatning upon the heads of these sinners.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *The preaching of the Word is the spiritual food of the soul*, and therefore the want of it is here rightly stiled a famine.

Man consists of two parts, of Soul and Body, and both these must be fed; the body which hath its Original from the earth, is maintained by earthly nourishment; but the soul which is spiritual, must be fed with the spiritual food of Gods Word; for as bread is the stay and staff of mans body, and the body cannot live without it, so Gods Word is the support of the soul, and it cannot live without that, hence it is called *Food*, *Jer.* 3. 15. & 15. 16. *John* 21. 15, 17. *Act.* 20. 28. 'Tis here, and here onely that Christ the bread of life is revealed unto us, *John* 6. 35. *Prov.* 9. 1. to 7. 'Tis in the Gospel that wee have a feast full fraught with spiritual delicates, *Psal.* 65. 4. *Isa.* 25. 6. & 55. 1, 2. Hence *David* makes such bitter lamentation for want of it, *Psal.* 42. 2, 3. and 84. and 'tis made one note of Gods people, that they mourn for want of the holy Assemblies, *Zeph.* 3. 18. *Lam.* 1. 4, 7. and 2. 6, 7. and 4. 1, and 5. 18. *Job* esteemed the word of the Lord *above his necessary food*, Job 23. 12. He did not only esteem it above Lands and livings, above gold and silver, but even above his appointed food, without which he could not live. He did more earnestly desire it, more heartily delight in it, and more highly prize it, than he did his necessary food, without which he could not subsist. He had rather lose his usual meals, than lose his opportunities of meditation on the Word of God. Hence 'tis that Gods Ministers are called *Stewards*, 1 *Cor.* 4. 1, 2.

The body hath its *alimentum naturale*, the soul its *alimentum spirituale*.

See Mr. *Will. Bartons* third sermon on Jer. 3. 15. p. 260.

Titus

Titus 1. 7. which must dispense this Bread of Life according to the capacity of their Hearers. They must give Milk to Babes, and strong meat to strong men; for Gods Word is both *Semen & Pabulum*, it is the seed by which we are new-born, *Jam.* 1. 18. 1 *Pet.* 1. 23. and the *food* by which we are nourisht after, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. by this the dead are inlivened, *Joh.* 5. 25. the dark inlightned, *Psal.* 19. 8. and the sorrowful comforted, *Isa.* 40. 1, 2. This shewes the great necessity and benefit of the preaching of Gods Word, and should make us prefer it unto our chiefest joy. But to this point I have spoken at large in a set Treatise.

Sal Terræ.

2 *Contempt of Gods Word brings a famine of the Word.*

The Lord here suites his Judgements to his Peoples sins. He had in great mercy raised up for this people of their owne Sons for Prophets, and taught them (not by strangers) but by Children that came from their owne loyns, yet they ungratefully said to the Prophets, *Prophesie not*, Amos 2. 11, 12. and commanded this our plain-dealing Prophet to preach no more at *Bethel*, but to goe see some other Countries, *Amos* 7. 12, 13, 16.

Hinc illæ Lachrymæ! This brought the famine amongst them. When God shall bestow the preaching of the Word upon a people, which is the choycest gift which he can bestow on the Sons of men, and they shall loathe this Mannah, and vilifie those that bring it; it is time the Lord should cease giving when such gifts are scorned, and cease loving, when his love is contemned. The *Jewes* that stoned the Prophets, killed the Apostles, and crucified Christ; for this great contempt, they have been a people of Gods Curse this sixteen hundred years. When men grow weary of truth, it is just with God that they should be left to error, and when they are weary of a faithful *Amos*, that they should have a flattering *Amaziah*; *When men will not receive the truth in love, God will give them over to strong delusions, that they shall beleeve lyes.* A dreadful Curse! 2 *Thes.* 2. 11. *q. d.* Since I have given them Light, and shewed them my Truth, and the way to Heaven, but they have rejected it; therefore there shall come false Prophets, and shall cry down Ordinances, Sabbaths, &c. and you shall beleeve them that shall set up humane inventions, and you shall follow them. When Children abuse their Bread and

See more in my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. p. 89, 90. and *Deuts* Plain-mans Path-way, p. 135. to 154.

play

play with it, and trample it under feet, it is time for Parents to take it from them. To bring these things *à Thesi ad Hypothesin*, and to apply this contempt of the Word to our selves, it may make us tremble to think whither we are fallen; Since the Apostles times the Gospel never shone so brighly as it doth at this day, and never was it and the Ministers of it more openly vilified, and that by many old Professors (who are turned blasphemers) than at this day; and therefore wee may justly fear that the Lord will punish our abuse of Light with the darknes of Popery; and take his Gospel from us, and give it to a people that shall yeeld him better fruits of it than wee have done. Sad tidings alwayes follow the contempt of the glad tidings of the Gospel; and they that think they have too much Preaching, shall at last have none at all. When *Jerusalem* began to abuse the Prophets, they were quickly made a desolation.

2 *The loss of the Word of God is the forest losse.*

No famine like this famine, no judgement like this judgement, *Lam.* 1. 4. it is the heaviest that can befall a people on this side Hell; which made *Luther* say, *I would not live in Paradise without the Word, but with it I could make a shift in Hell it self. David* knew this full wel, and therefore in the midst of all his wants, he was most sensible of this, and begs it as that one thing necessary, that he might dwell in the House of the Lord, *Psal.* 27. 4. It is true, Corporal famine is very terrible, and brings people into sad perplexities, and extremities, as you may see, *Lam.* 1. 11. 19. & 2. 12, 20. & 4. 4, 9. & 5. 4. 6. 16. but this Spiritual famine is farre worse. For,

See more before, on Amos

1 That and other Judgements pinch but the *body*, but this pines the *soul*; now as the soul is more noble and excellent than the body, so its Judgements are farre more dreadful, because Spiritual. It is sad when men shall cry for bread, and they have a Stone given them; for meat, and they have a Serpent; for drink, and their Pastors (or Impostors rather) give them Poyson.

ubi non est verbum Dei, quid nisi ruina & mors, etsi in speciem omnia floreret videantur? Merter.

2 That may be a means to bring a man home to God, but this increaseth, and confirms the separation between God and the soul.

3 That kills but the body at worst, but this destroyes *both body and soul*. So that as our Saviour said in another case,

about fearing of men, so may I say, *about fearing of famines*; fear not that famine which can but kill the body, but I will fore-tell you what you should fear; Fear that Famine which can destroy both body and soul, yea I say unto you, fear that.

4 Here is a *Thirst* added to the famine, *a thirst of water*. Though God sometimes punisheth Cities with famine, yet they may have water to drink; but if they want both bread, and especially water, the distress lyes very heavy; for *Thirst* if it be in extremity, is one of the most painful and intolerable Passions that is in this life; now the Prophet applyes this to the Spiritual famine and want of Gods Word, *q. d.* if it be a great Judgement to be tormented with bodily famine and thirst; how great is the Judgement then that I denounce against you, who shall have both famine and thirst, and that not of bodily bread or water, but of the Word of God, which is the Bread and Water of Life, and as farre excells all Corporal bread, as the Soul excells the body? And as it is sad to have children cry for bodily bread, and there is none to give them; so it is much more sad when men shall cry for Spiritual bread, and there is none that can or will give it them.

See *Hildersham* on Joh. 4. 13. Lect. 9. p. 39. 40.

2 As the giving of Preachers to dispense the Word unto us is reckoned as *the choycest mercy*, Job 33. 23, 24. Isa. 30. 20, 21. Jer. 3. 15. Ephes. 4. 11. because it brings light in darkness, joy in sorrow, life in death, health in sickness, strength in weakness, and brings us to an interest in God, and having him we have the Mine, the Fountain, All. So on the contrary, the removal of the Word from a people, is reckoned amongst the sorest Judgements, 1 *Sam.* 28. 6. *Psal.* 74. 9. *Prov.* 29. 18. *Lam.* 2. 9. *Ezek.* 3. 25. *Hos.* 4. 17. *Micah* 2. 6. *Amos.* 15. 14. dry Breasts are reckoned as a Curse, *Hos.* 9. 14. for when the Word goes, the greatest Mercies and Priviledges of a People goe with it, *Rev.* 2. 5.

See Mr. *Will. Burton* on Jer. 3. 15. Sect. 3.

M. Sol Temporis Sermon 3. p. 46.

As 1. When the Word goes, *God goes too*, 2 Chron. 15. 2. and woe to a people when God goes, *Hos.* 9. 12. then men may persecute us, and there is none to deliver us, *Psal.* 71. 11. when he is gone, *the glory* of a People is gone, *Isa.* 4. 5. As the Ark, that was a Symbol and sign of Gods presence amongst his People, was called *the Glory* of *Israel*, 1 Sam. 4. ult. So the Preaching of the Gospel amongst us is our glory, *Hag.* 2. 9. and if it depart, we may write *Ichabod* upon all our other

That Gods presence in his Ordinances is a People's greatest glory. See Mr. *Marshals* Fast Serm. on 2 Chron. 15. 2. p. 55, 56. printed 1642.

ther enjoyments, that is, *There is no glory*; for the glory is departed from *Israel* since the Ark of God is taken. It is said of *Constantinople*, that it is fortified with three Bulwarks. 1. With Wood, *i. e.* with Shipping. 2. With Stones, *i. e.* with high Walls. 3. With Bones, *i. e.* with valiant men. But it wants a fourth, *viz.* The presence of God in his Ordinances, without which all other Fortifications are but vain, *Isa.* 22. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. *Nahum* 3. 12, 13. Christ is called a King, *Psal.* 2. 6. & 110. 3. *Zech.* 9. 9. now the presence of a King is the glory of a place; and where he is truly preached, there he is truly present; though the place and people be never so mean. *Vilissimum pagum est ubunendum Palatium, ubi est sincerus Pastor, & fideles aliqui. Luther.*

2 The *Protection* of a people goes. Where there is no Vision, there a people lye naked, and exposed to Divine displeasure, and all Gods sore Judgements break in upon them *Prov.* 29. 18. the contempt of the Word laid this potent and flourishing Kingdome of *Israel* in the dust.

3 *Peace, Plenty, Comfort, Riches, all go when the Gospel goes.* As the Gospel comes not empty handed to a People, but brings Peace, Plenty, Renown, and Glory with it, *Exod.* 20. 24. (*Isa.* 60. that whole Chapter) so when ever the Gospel goes, these concomitants goe along with it. As we see in *Jerusalem* which lies now in the dust, and the seven Churches of *Asia*.

4 *Salvation* goes; for the Preaching of the Word is the ordinary means of Salvation. Those that sin away the ordinary means must never look for extraordinary; whom God saves now, he saves by Preaching, *Rom.* 1. 16. 1 *Cor.* 1. 21.

5 Without the Word we cannot *grow in Grace*, it is not sufficient that we have the truth of Grace, but God looks that we should shew it by our growth in grace, 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. & 1 *Pet.* 2. 2.

6 Without the Word *no comfort*, we shall perish in our afflictions unlesse Gods Law be our delight, *Psal.* 119. 92. It is through comfort of the Scriptures that we have hope, *Rom.* 15. 4.

7 Without the Word we are naked, and cannot defend our selves; it is with this sword of the Spirit that we defend our selves against the assaults of our Spiritual adversaries, *Ephes.* 6. 17.

8. If the Word be gone, we have *no Rule* to walk by, no Star to direct us, and ſo ſhall run into the boggs of unwritten Traditions, Revelations, New-lights, and a thouſand old errours. If once we forſake the Law and the Teſtimony, to walk in the light of our own fire, following our own corrupt reaſon, we are ſure at laſt to lye down in ſorrow, *Iſa.* 50. 11.

9. When the Word departs and goes out, then all *miſeries* croud in. *Non datur vacuum*, holds true in Divinity, as well as in Philoſophy.

1. Then the Devil ſets up his Throne, *Rev.* 2. 13. and wickedneſſe abounds. When Chriſts Kingdome goes down, then Satans comes up; when the Sun ſets, night follows.

2. Your children will be *Idolaters*, and you will bring forth children to the murderer; when people have not the true God, they will have a falſe one.

3. Many temporal plagues will follow, as appears by the two following verſes, *verſ.* 13, 14. Where the famine of the Word goes before, there Sword, Plague, Famine, and other Judgements uſually follow: In *Queen Maries* time, when we loſt the Word, we had loſſes by Sea, and loſſes by Land, and had ſuch a terrible famine, that the people were forced to make bread of Acorns. When Truth and Gods Ordinances are gone, Vines and Fig-trees will not be long after, *Hoſ.* 2. 11, 12. When the Lord would make way for his extreameſt wrath, to come upon a people, he firſt takes away his faithful Miniſters, that ſhould lye in the breach to intercede for them, that ſo his wrath may come upon them to the utmoſt, *Pſal.* 74. 8, 9. *Lam.* 2. 7, 8.

See Mr. Burroughs on the place. p. 459, &c.

Let us then uſe all means to prevent this Land-deſtroying Judgement: to this end, 1. Be humbled for the ſins of the times, which call for the removing of our Candleſtick out of its place. 2. Beſiege Heaven with your prayers, *Mat.* 9. 36. this is an Omnipotent Engine, whereby we conquer God. To quicken your prayers, conſider what a ſad loſſe the loſſe of the Word is, as you have ſeen in nine particulars before. 3. Walk as becomes the Goſpel; if any thing remove the Goſpel from amongſt us, 'tis our prophane, impure, ungoſpel-like, looſe converſation that will do it.

Eſt quadam precum omnipotentia. Luther.

See twelve ſins that help to remove the Goſpel *Sangar. Morn. Lect* 9. p. 93, 94, &c.

4. *As corporal, ſo ſpiritual famine comes from God.*

As

As all evil of affliction, so this amongst the rest comes from him.

1. He sometimes sends it *immediately*, when he chargeth the Prophets to prophesie no more in his name. As he commands the clouds to with-hold their Rain, and so brings a corporal famine; so when sinners grow obstinate, he commands his Ministers to with-hold their spiritual showers, and to let them alone, that they may perish in their iniquity, *Hos.* 4. 17. *Mat.* 15. 14.

2. When by death he takes away his Ministers, when people cast dirt upon them, the Lord casts dust upon them, and hides them in their graves from the revilings of men.

2. Mediately, 1. By a corrupt *Magistracy*. Thus *Ahab* and *Jesabel* persecuted the true Prophets, and made them hide themselves in caves. So *Herod* that Tyrant cut off *John Baptists* head.

2. By a corrupt *Ministery*; false Prophets in all ages have been the greatest persecutors of the true. Thus *Amos* here hath *Amaziah* the high Priest of *Bethel* against him, *Amos* 7. 10. His punishment you may read, *vers.* 17. Thus *Pashur* the Priest smote *Jeremiah*, and put him in the stocks, *Jer.* 20. 7. My Lord *Annas* and *Caiphas* the High Priest, with the Scribes and Pharisees were the greatest enemies to Christ and his Apostles.

3. When men are given up in judgement to their own hearts lusts, so that they stop their ears against the Word, and will not hear, *Zach.* 7. 12.

4. When men muzzle the mouths of these laborious Oxen, and ungratefully change their wages, and withdraw the Oil from the Lamp, and pick the tallow from the weik. 'Tis just with God to starve such souls, as would starve his Ministers bodies; you must therefore buy the Truth, and with the wise men, part with your gold and silver for Christ, *Mat.* 2. 11. You may buy gold too dear, but you cannot buy Christ and his Truth too dear; though you part with all your temporals for the Gospel, you have made a wise bargain, *Matth.* 13. 44. *V. Salterre. cap.* 8. p. 122.

5. Spiritual *curiosity* and niceness, when men have itching ears, so that they cannot indure sound Doctrine, 2 *Tim.* 4. 4. When nothing will down but quails, and picking meat, they are all for flourishes, and Rhetorical strains, and smoothe things,

things, *Isa.* 30. 20. The doctrine of Mortification and Selfdenial will not down with them.

6. *Barrennesse under the means of grace*, when we do not answer Gods cost and care, then he pulls up the hedge, and laies all waste; *Isa.* 5. 11, 12, 13. *Mat.* 21. 43. *Rev.* 2. 3. They that will not work in the day, shall lament their folly in the night; they that will not serve God in the injoyment of Ordinances, shall serve their lusts in the want of them. Let us therefore walk in the light, whilst we have the light; when the night comes no man can work.

See more on Amos 8. 11, 12. in Dr. *Thomas Taylors* Serm. on that Text, in his Sermons, in folio p. 207, &c.

Verse 12.

And they shall wander from Sea to Sea, and from the North even to the East, they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord, and shall not finde it.

IN this verse we have a further aggravation of this peoples misery, *viz.* that they should seek what they had despised, and withall they should have a frustration of their expectation. They had contemned the Word of the Lord, and now God in his just judgement will make them know the worth of his Word by the wanting of it. *They shall wander from Sea to Sea.* They shall trouble themselves without any profit. They hated the light, and therefore now they shall sit in darkness; they contemned Gods Prophets, and now they shall not be troubled with them; formerly God sent his Prophets, rising early to seek them, but now since by their sins they had driven both God and his Prophets from them, they should run from Sea to Sea, that is, from the Red Sea Southward, to the Mediterranean Sea Westward (which were the bounds of the Land of *Canaan*, *Numb.* 34. 3. *Josh.* 1. 4. *Josh.* 2. 20. *Zech.* 9. 10.) Yea they should run from North accrosse unto the East, that is, in plain English, they should run all the Land over, and seek the word of the Lord in every corner, and quarter of it, and yet they should misse of it. If the famine be but in one part of a Land, a man may run to another part of it for aid; but when they shall cry for bread in all the parts of the land, and there is none to give them, that is dolefull indeed.

Ab Aquilone ad ortum, i. e. longissimè dissita loca, & velut è diametro opposita, patent. Mercer.

Quest.

Q. *Here a Question will arise, Hath not the Lord promised, that those that ask shall have, and they that seek shall find; and such as hunger and thirst shall be blessed, how comes it then to passe, that this people seek the Word of the Lord, and yet cannot finde it?*

A. The Answer is easie, there is a two-fold seeking and thirsting.

1 A seasonable, serious, and sincere seeking after God in his Worship, and to such the Promise runs, that they shall finde, *Prov.* 8. 17. God never sayes to the genuine seed of *Jacob*, Seek my face in vain, *Isa.* 45. 19. This Spiritual hungring and thirsting after the sincere milk of the Word, that we may grow thereby, is an infallible evidence of grace.

2 There is a formal, feigned, late seeking of Gods Word, *Luke* 13. 24. only in the time of trouble, when pain oppresseth them; such may seek, but they shall never find: and thus it was with *Israel* here, they sought not the Word out of any love to it, nor yet to be converted by it, but being in trouble, and seeing (when it was too late) what a blessing they had lost; they now howl after it, as those did for bodily food, *Hos.* 7. 14. and as *Esau* did for the Birth-right, when it was too late, *Heb.* 12. 17. So these in a blind, erroneous, distracted manner desired to hear the Word of the Lord from the mouth of the Prophets, not to be instructed by it (for they hated to be reformed) but to get some ease and comfort from them in their distresse; for the Prophets were wont to mingle comfort with their Threatnings, and to tell the people of God how long their troubles should endure, and when they should end, *Psal.* 74. 9. But since the Lord spake to them by his Prophets in their prosperity, and they would not beleeve, that so they might fly from the wrath to come; now they should sink under their burden, and run to and fro for a Prophet of the Lord to comfort them, but they should not have it; for as the Lord called and they would not answer, so they should now cry, and should not be heard, *Prov.* 1. 24, 25, 26, 27. so that it is a fallacy to argue thus, All that seek shall find, and all that hunger and thirst are blest.

But these did seek, therefore they shall find; and these did hunger and thirst after the word, therefore they shall bee blessed.

Rep obi ubi se spoliatos dent Deficiis, non afficiuntur ut respiscant, sed tantum sentiunt caecos cruciatus, ut seipsos torqueant sine aliquo effectu. Calvin.

The

The Major must be limited, thus:

All that seek aright, and all that doe truly hunger and thirst after the Word shall be blessed. But these did seek aright, and did truly hunger and thirst after the Word.

That is false, for by hunger and thirst here is not meant their hungring after the VVord, but it implies a want of the VVord; as a man that is pined wants food, so in *Israel* there should be a great want of the Prophets to preach the Word unto them.

Some take the words in an Allegorical, Mystical sense, and apply it to the *Jewes* after they had Crucified Christ, and stoned the Prophets, they should run from place to place to seek the VVord of the Lord, and should not find it. But this is too lax and general, and is against the context, which applies it to the ten Tribes, *vers.* 14.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Those that will find the Lord when they seek him, must seek him whilst he may be found, Isa. 55. 6. Psal. 32. 6. 2 Cor 6. 2.*

VVe must walk in the light whilst we have the light, the night comes when no man can work, *Joh.* 12. 35, 36. This people here lost all for want of seeking in a right manner and season, they sought the VVord, but it was when it was too late.

See twenty Motives to press this duty in my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 15. p. 253.

2 *The scarcity of the Word (many times) makes it to bee more highly prized by us.*

VVhen this Mannah fell thick about this people they regarded it not, but now they have lost their Prophets they can run from Sea to Sea to seek them. Those Sermons and Ordinances which people vilify now, when God removes them, they will magnifie and praise them. It is with those good wayes of God, as it is with good men, whilst they be alive amongst us we are ready to stone them, but when they are dead we are ready to Idolize them. Usually Gods blessings are more esteemed and valued by us when they are *Rare*, and we want them, than when we surfeit and abound with them. Things that are very rare are very precious, *Isa.* 4. 1. & 13. 12. Hence we read of dayes wherein the VVord of the Lord was

Virtutem præsentem odimus, sublatam ex oculis colimus invidi. Horat. Carendo potius quam fruendo. Sen.

was rare, and then it was precious in those dayes, and why? because *there was no open Vision*; there was not a known Prophet in those dayes to teach the people, and this made the Ordinances so precious then, 1 *Sam.* 3. 1.

The Commonness of the Sun, of VVater, Food, Rayment, Health, VVealth, Peace, Liberty, Sleep, Senses, &c. make them little esteemed; whereas if the Lord should deprive us of any one of them, we should quickly know the worth of them. See Mr. *Case* on Afflictions, p. 13, 14, 15.

Lament this thy folly, and beseech the Lord to make thee know the worth of his blessings by the *enjoying*, rather than by the *wanting* of them.

3 *When people want the Word of God they should goe from place to place, yea from Land to Land, rather than pine and perish for want of instruction.*

In times of Dearth we see how farre people will travel for food for their Bodies (as *Jacobs* Sons did from *Canaan* to *Ægypt*) and shall not we take more pains for our immortal Souls? If the Queen of *Sheba* (a person of great wealth and worth) went above a thousand miles to hear the VVisdome of *Solomon*, how farre should we goe to hear a greater than *Solomon*? Luke 11. 31. How farre will men ride and run for the profits and pleasures of their bodies, and shall not we be at more pains to save our Souls? In the dayes of Christ the people followed him from City to City on *the Week-dayes* to hear him, and he never reproved them for it, but fed their souls and bodies, *Luke* 6. 17. See my Com. on 2 Tim. 4. 2. p. 326.

VER. 13.

In that day shall the fair Virgins, and the young men, faint for thirst.

IN the two precedent Verses the Prophet threatens a Spiritual famine, now follows a Corporal famine and destruction, from which none should escape; neither the Young mans strength, nor the Virgins Beauty should any whit avayl them in that day.

In this Verse we have, 1 A Judgement threatned, and that is *Thirst*, *they should faint for thirst*. The question will be,

what is meant by Thirst here? 1. Some take it literally for corporal thirst, which in these hot Countries where they wanted water, was a very grievous thing. Poor that want bread, yet have water many times to refresh them, but when a people have neither bread nor water, it must needs go hard with them.

2. This *Thirst* sets forth the great poverty, and extream want of all things which this people should be brought into, (so the word is used, *Deut.* 28. 48. *Isa.* 44. 3. for great afflictions) and the terrour of that final judgement which was coming upon them. They should not have so much as a little water to quench their thirst, but they should faint for thirst, (as men use to do in such cases) *Psal.* 107. 5. *Isa.* 51. 19, 20. This sense I take to be the most genuine.

3. Yet others take Thirst Metaphorically; for *Spiritual Thirst*, Gods wrath should burn them, and burden them, and yet they should have none to refresh and comfort them in their trouble. We have a Comment on this Text, in *Hos.* 2. 3, 4. where the Lord threatens *to strip these Idolatrous Israelites naked, as in the day when they were born, and to make them a wilderness, and set them in a dry Land, and slay them with thirst*; that is, he would destroy them with the scorching heat of his wrath, not tempered with any grace or comfort. So great should their misery be, that they should want both corporal and spiritual refreshing.

2. Here are the persons which should perish, and those are the prime and flower of the Land, the very hope of posterity. *The beautiful Virgins, and the Young Men.* These usually sin with an high hand, in open contempt of God and his word, they sin with more height and violence of affection, than elder persons use to do, and therefore the Lord threatens them especially.

Virgins use to be spared by men for their tenderness and beauty, but God is no respecter of persons, and young men are strong, and can better shift for themselves, yet these, even these, for all their beauty, vigour and strength, shall faint and dye, sorrow and perplexity shall cover and overwhelm them, as the word signifies; and if these cannot hold out, what shall become of children and old persons? This shews the generality of the Judgement, and that none shall escape.

Operientur mœrore.

3. Here

3. Here is the time when all this shall come upon them, *'Tis in that day, viz.* when *Israel* shall go into captivity, and be carried out of his own Land by the cruel *Assyrians*; when *Samaria* should be taken, and Gods Prophets scattered, *then shall they faint for thirst.*

See more in Dr. *Thomas Taylor*, on Amos 8. 13, 14. in folio p. 263, &c.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Where spiritual Judgements go before, there corporal Judgements follow after.*

Such as contemn spiritual bread, shall want corporal. Before we read of a spiritual famine, now follows corporal distress of the choicest and fairest of both sexes. So true is that of *Solomon, Prov.* 13. 13, 18. *Whoso despiseth the Word, shall be destroyed, yea poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction.*

2. *Beauty is vanity*, Prov. 31. 30. Isa. 3. 24. & 40. 6, 7.

'Tis a brittle thing, what disease almost doth not make it fade and wither? however it may take with vain man, yet it moves not God. If beautiful Virgins will sin against God, *even the fair Virgins shall faint.* Many have beauty that have not piety, *Prov.* 6. 25. & 11. 22. *Saul* and *Absolom* were goodly personages, yet wicked men. Of the two, better have Piety without Beauty, than Beauty without Piety. An upright, pure soul, in a black decrepit body, is excellent. God many times makes up outward deformities with inward excellencies. *Socrates* and *Esop* were deformed in body, yet who more wise and witty?

Felix nigredo quæ mentis candorem habet. V. A Lapide in Eccles. 11. 2. & *Sphinx Theolog. cap.* 15.

Ingenio pollet, cui vim natura negavit. Cato.

3. *Sin sweeps all before it.*

It deprives us not onely of bread, but also of water too, yea it deprives us not onely of corporal, but also of spiritual bread. It robs us of all our comforts, great reason then we have to hate it. 'Tis like that weed which we call Bishopsweed, which frets away all the corn and good grain that grows neer it.

4. *The sins of young persons provoke the Lord to cut them off.*

Their sins are committed with more wilfulness, heat and violence, and so are more displeasing unto God, As I

have shewed before, on *Amos* 4. 10. Obs. 6.

5. *'Tis the great misery of wicked men, that they have no comfort in their misery.*

VVhen they be scorched with the wrath of God, yet they faint for thirst. The godly that thirst in a right spiritual manner, have Gods Spirit and Ministers to comfort them, and pronounce them blessed, *Mat.* 5. 6. But the wicked faint and sink under their burdens, and have not so much as one shower of Rain from Heaven, to quench and allay the flaming fire of Gods indignation, *Ezek.* 22. 24.

See this spiritual thirst set forth in seven particulars, by Mr *Obad. Sedgwick*, on Isa. 55. 1. p. 5, 6. & Mr. *Hildersham* on John 4. 13. Lect. 9.

VERSE 14.

They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, Thy God, O Dan, liveth, and the manner of Beersheba liveth, even they shall fall, and never rise up again.

THe Prophet having reproved them before for their oppression and unrighteousness *towards men*, comes now to denounce Gods Judgements against them, for their Superstition and Idolatry *towards God*.

In the words we have 1. A Commination, or a Judgement threatned, and that is, the irreparable ruine of the Ten Tribes, *They shall fall, and never rise up again.* They shall fall (for their cruelty and Idolatry) that they shall rise no more. If a man fall, and yet hath hope of rising again, it upholds and comforts him; but these Israelites fell into captivity, and never were restored. *Judah*, which was the better of the two, after the seventy years captivity, returned again into their own Land; but the Ten Tribes were carried out of their own Land by *Salmaneser* King of *Assyria*, and never returned any more, *Amos* 5. 2. The Lord had tried all gentle means to cure them, but all in vain, and therefore now he resolves to make a final end with them, and to smite them so as *they shall fall* irrecoverably, and never rise up again, nor return more to their own Land, as appears, 2 *King.* 17. To fall, and never rise, to dye, and not live, to be set below, and not above, to sit in darkness, and have no light; such amplifications in Scripture are vehement asseverations, and are not used in vain by God.

2 Here

2. Here is the ground or reason of this Comination, and that is, their Superstition and Idolatry,

They sware { 1. By the sin of *Samaria*.
2. By the God of *Dan*.
3. By the manner of *Beersheba*.

That is, They sware by the Molten Images, and Golden Calves, which *Jeroboam* the King of *Samaria* had set up at *Dan* and *Bethel*. These Idols are called, *The sin of Samaria*, because *Samaria* was the Metropolis, and chief seat of their Kings, and they setting up Idolatry at *Bethel*, which was not far from *Samaria*, drew *Samaria* and all the people of the Land with them, and therefore this sin is properly laid at their doors. When the people of *Israel* in *Moses* his time did worship the golden Calf, it is called their *Sin*, *Deut.* 9. 21. I took *your Sin*, that is, I took the Molten Calf, wherewith you had committed that abominable sin of Idolatry, and burnt it with fire, and the Scripture frequently calls Idols by the name of sin, 1 *King.* 12. 29, 30. *Isa.* 27. 9. & 31. 7. *Hos.* 10. 8. *Zach.* 5. 8. They thought they had done God an high peece of service, in sacrificing and swearing by the Calves, but the Lord plainly tells them, that 'twas their great sin so to do.

Asham, peccatum, delictum, a verbo Asham, miquè fecit, deliquit. Syn. Gen.

Dicitur delictum Samariæ, quia gravissimi sanè delicti regis & populi tum effectus, tum objectum fuit. Estius in loca difficil.

3. He goes on to prove their Idolatry, by their forms of swearing then in use, for our oaths are a kinde of confession of our Faith, whereby we testifie, that hee whom we swear by knows our hearts, and is able to punish us if we swear falsly; hence swearing is frequently put for religious worship. This swearing by Idols, and fictitious Gods (as Idolaters use to do) as if they had no other God to swear by, could not but highly provoke the Lord to cast them off, who thus ungratefully and dis-ingenuously forsook him, the fountain of all their happiness.

They say, *Thy God O Dan lives*; or they swear by the life of *Dan*, which yet was a dead Idol, and had no life in it. This was the usual form of swearing in those daies, as you may see, *Gen.* 42. 15. *Judg.* 8. 19. *Ruth* 3. 13. *Jer.* 12. 16. They used the same form of swearing by their Idols, as the godly did

Jurant, ita ut vivit Deus qui in Dan colitur. Grotius.

by the true God. *Thy God O Dan lives*, (*i. e.*) Let thy Calf live O *Dan*, or as sure as thy Calf lives, O *Dan*. They swaare by this Idol, as if there were some Deity and Divinity in it, when 'twas a meer abomination, and Idol of their own inventing, *Hos.* 8. 5, 6. *Jeroboam* when he came first to the Crown, set up two Golden Calves, as tutelar Gods, the one at *Bethel*, not far from *Samaria*; the other in *Dan*, which was in the North part of *Canaan*, it being one of the utmost coasts thereof, 1 *King.* 12. 29, 30. *Jer.* 4. 15.

4. Yet more, *They swear by the manner of Beersheba. Beersheba* was a City of *Canaan*, *Josh.* 19. 2, being the utmost bound of the holy Land toward the South, as *Dan* was toward the North, hence from *Dan* to *Beersheba* are oft put for the whole Land of *Israel*, from one end to the other, they being the utmost borders of the whole Land, *Judg.* 20. 1. 1 *Sam.* 3. 20. 2 *Sam.* 3. 10. 1 *Chron.* 8. 2. 'Twas a famous City, where the Judges used to sit, 1 *Sam.* 8. 2. yet this place was infected with Idolatry, as well as *Bethel* and *Gilgal*, and therefore they are commanded to pass by it, *Amos* 5. 5. and yet they swear, *that the manner of Beersheba lives.* Or the *way* of *Beersheba* lives (as 'tis in the fountain) that is, they swear by a strange God, whose way, Rites, Ceremonies, and manner of Worship they had set up at *Beersheba*: for *by way* in Scripture is meant the manner of divine worship and serving of God. 'Tis here taken in a bad sense. See *Jer.* 32. 39. *Act.* 9. 2. & 18. 25. & 24. 14. Thus we see how the whole Land was infected with Idolatry, from one side to another, there was no sound part in it, which serves to justifie Gods Justice in their universal ruine.

Deretch Via.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Idolatry, it is a sinning sin.*

It is the *Sin* with an Emphasis, and by way of eminency, which destroys a Land, *Deut.* 9. 21. it is a great sin in it self, and the root of many other abominations; whatever Sin God bears withall, yet he cannot, he will not bear with this (as I have shewed at large elsewhere) other sins were *Causa adjuvantes*, they helpt to ruine *Israel*, but their Idolatry was the

In my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. Obs. 12. p. 88, 133, 139, 158, 160.

the primary cause of that fatal blow, and of their final overthrow.

2 *The Judgement of men, and the Judgement of God differ much.*

That which man calls here by way of honour, *a god*, that God calls by way of dishonour and detestation, *A Sin*, and abominable, *Jer.* 16. 18. & 44. 4. Thus the world calls Riches, Substance, Goods, Happinesse, *Psal.* 4. 6. but the Holy Ghost calls them Vanities, Thorns, Husks, unrighteous Mammon: the world calls Pride, Decency, but God calls it an abomination. The world calls Covetousnesse, Good-husbandry, but God calls it the root of all evil. The Masse, with all its Superstitious rites, Antichrist calls it Divine Service, but God saith, *In vain doe yee worship me, teaching for Doctrines the Precepts of men.* Satan loves not to have Sin goe bare-faced, and therefore he usually puts a fair Glove upon a foul hand, and calls Vice by the name of Vertue. But God hath cursed those that call evil good, Isa. 5. 20. many think they highly please God, and doe him abundance of service by their Superstitious, Self-conceited worship, but he tells them here, it is their sin and shame so to doe; So true is that of our Saviour, *Luke* 16. 15. *That which is highly esteemed in the sight of* carnal, superstitious *men, is an abomination in the sight of God.*

See *Brooks* his remedies against Sat. Dev. p. 18. to 27.

3 *Mixture in Gods Worship is a God-provoking Sin.*

When we are partly for God, and partly for *Baal*, partly for Christ, and partly for Calves at *Dan* and *Beersheba*, this mingle-mangle, and Linsi-woolsie-religion is very displeasing unto God, and ruined *Israel* here. They pretended that they Worshipped the true God, in and by those Idols which they sware by, but because God had commanded them no such way of Worship, he utterly disclaims it, and severely punisheth them for their pains, 2 *King.* 17. 33, 34. those that are said to fear the Lord, and yet serve their owne gods, in the very next verse are said, *Not to fear the Lord.*

See *Crook* against Hypocrisie. P. 1. ch. 11. p. 107.

4 *We may not swear by Idols.*

It is a Deifying of them; hence the Lord threatens to punish those that swear by them that are no gods, *Jer.* 5. 7. *Zeph.* 1. 5. we may not swear by Creatures, *Matth.* 5. 34, 35, 36. *Jam.* 5. 12. nor by any fictitious gods at *Dan* and *Bethel*, as many

V. Danæi Ethic. Christ. l. 2. cap. 9. p. 113. folio.

many Popish, ignorant persons amongst us doe; when they swear *Ber Lady*, *Ber Lakins*, by St. *Anthony*, by S Gys, by the Masse, by Cock, by my Fay, by my Feiks, by my Feikins, by my Truly, &c. All these are Oathes, by Idols and by Creatures, which our jealous God will not brook at our hands; you may mock men with them, but God will not be mocked; his Curse will seize upon the houses where such swearers dwell, *Zach.* 5. 3.

See Mr. *Clerks* Mirror, ch. 129. and *Denis* Path-way, p. 154. to 166.

We all professe our selves to be worshippers of the true God, yet our swearing by them that are no gods is a kind of renouncing the true God, by whom only we should swear, as him only we should serve. God is very tender of his owne Glory, and will not suffer it to be given to others. Hence wee are so oft commanded when we swear, to swear only by the name of the true and living God, *Deut.* 9. 13. *&* 10. 20. *Psa.* 63. *ult.* *Isa.* 45. 23. *&* 65. 16. *Jer.* 12. 16.

Oathes are one special part of Divine Worship, wherein God is glorified in his Attributes of Omnisciency, Omni-presence, Omnipotence, &c. We beleeve that he knowes our hearts, and is able to punish us if we perform not our Oathes, or swear falsly; and to this end we call upon him when wee swear. Hence *Isaiah* Prophesying of the calling of the *Ægyptians* to the faith, tells us, that in that day five Cities in *Ægypt* shall speak the Language of *Canaan*, *and shall swear by the Lord of Hosts*; that is, they shall shew that he is their God, by their swearing by his name, *Isa.* 19. 18.

5 *Superstition is a toylsome thing.*

See my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. p. 119, 120. & *Clerks* Mirror, chap. 128.

They goe here to *Dan* and *Beersheba*, from the North to the South, all the Land over after Idols, 1 *King.* 12. 30. what pains and Peregrinations doe the Papists take in Journies, Whippings, and other kinds of Will-worship, yet many amongst us will scarce goe out of their doors to hear the Gospel of Salvation. Blind Idolaters shall rise in Judgment against the men of this Generation, who take more pains in going to Hell, than many doe for Heaven.

6 *Great Cities many times are the Seminaries of great Sins.*

The Idolatry which over-spread all *Israel* is laid here at *Samarias* door, which was the chief City of the Land, and the place of the Kings residence, from hence as from a fountain all the streams of Prophanenesse, Superstition, and Idolatry

ery over-spread the Land, here it was practised, maintained, and upheld; and therefore the Priests Rolls could have special care to keep the great Circles of the Land pure, that they may be patterns of Piety, and Looking-glasses by which the Country round about them may dresse themselves; for such as the Mother, such usually are the Daughters.

7. Idolaters shall be utterly ruined.

They shall be at last so broken, that they shall never rise more. A good man may fall into afflictions and trouble seven times in a day, yet he riseth again, but the wicked shall fall into mischief irrecoverably, and never rise more, as the *Antithesis* implies, *Prov.* 24. 16. *Job* fell into deep distresse, yet at last he rose again, and his latter end was better than his beginning, *Job* 42. 12. but the wicked are broken as with an Iron Rod, and dasht in peices like a Potters Vessel, which can never be sodred together again, *Psal.* 2. 9. God strikes them through the gall, so that all the Physitians in the world cannot heal them, *Job* 20. 25.

See Mr. Trapp on Prov. 24. 16.

AN EXPOSITION, WITH Practical OBSERVATIONS UPON The Ninth Chapter of *Amos*.

VERSE 1.

I saw the Lord standing upon the Altar, and hee said, Smite the lintel of the door, that the posts may shake: and cut them in the head all of them, and I will slay the last of them with the sword: hee that fleeth of them shall not flee away, and he that escapeth of them, shall not be delivered.

IN this last Chapter, which contains the last Vision and Prophecy of the destruction of *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, wee have the summe and substance of the *seventh* Sermon of the Prophet *Amos*, which consists of three parts.

1. A *Commination*.
2. A *confirmation of that Commination*.
3. A *Mitigation or Qualification* of this Commination with Evangelical promises of consolation and restauration. So that this Chapter consists both of Law and Gospel, of judgement and mercy; which is the best mixture that a Prophet of God

can

can use, because all ingenuous natures are wrought upon, either by judgements or mercies, and those that neither of those can work upon, are desperate.

1. Here is a continuation of Gods Commination by way of Type or Vision, wherein we have, 1. The Vision *propounded, viz. the smiting of the lintel of the Temple door, that the posts might shake.* Denoting thereby the certainty of their ruine and transportation, without any possibility of escaping.

2. The Vision is *expounded, vers.* 1. where we have 1. The *persons* that shall be cut off, and those are the body of the people, the generality of the Land, both great and small; as all had sinned, so all must now suffer for sin. 2. He commands, *Smite them in the head*, that is, cut off Kings, Princes and Priests, both in *Israel* and *Judah*. 3. Rest not there, but *slay the rest of them with the sword*, that is, cut off the inferiour sort. 3. Here is the certainty and inevitableness of their suffering confirmed by Arguments drawn, first from the Omnipresence of God, no place what ever can protect a sinful people from his revenging hand, and this is set forth 1. Generally, *vers.* 1. *He that flyeth, shall not flee away, and he that escapeth, shall not be delivered.* There is no escaping when God pursues.

2. By a notable enumeration of some particular places, shewing that they should not escape though they hid themselves

1. In Hell, *vers.* 2.
2. In Heaven.
3. In the tops of inaccessible mountains, *vers.* 3.
4. In the bottome of the Sea.
5. In Captivity. Though they went into banishment out of their own Land, yet *there the Lord would command the sword, and it should slay them*, vers. 4. So that they were safe neither at home nor abroad, neither in their own Land, nor in strange Countries.

4. Their total overthrow is further confirmed by Arguments drawn 1. From the anger of God, *vers.* 4. *I will set mine eyes upon them for evil.* Tis a Metaphor from men in whom the anger of the heart discovers it self in the eyes and face.

2. From the might and majesty of God, who hath power to punish them; and this power is set forth, 1. By his Fisher,

the Lord God of hosts, vers. 5. 2. By the effects of his power.

1. *If he but touch the Land, it shall melt*, vers. 5. with a touch he can destroy a Land, and turn it into its first Chaos.

2. He can bring an overflowing flood upon it, that shall quickly over-run all, vers. 5.

3. By his work of Creation, 1. *In Heaven*, *He hath built his stories in Heaven*. By his power and wisdome he created the Heavens, and the several spheares and regions of the Air, as so many stories one above another, vers. 6.

2. *In the earth*, he hath founded his Troops in the earth, vers. 6. He hath variety of creatures, as so many Troops on earth ready prest to serve him, and execute his commands, they are all his servants, *Psal.* 119. 91.

3. *In the Sea*. He calleth for the waters of the Sea, and they presently cover the face of the earth, vers. 6. By all which he proves himself to be, The Great *Jehovah* of all the world.

5. He confirms the certainty of their destruction from the sinfulness of their condition. As first, They were disingenuous and ungrateful, whereas he had brought them up out of the Land of *Egypt*, and made them his *Israel*, yet they behaved themselves more *like Ethiopians, than Israelites*, and therefore as they had been like to Heathens in sinning, so now they should be like them in suffering, vers. 7.

2. They were very secure and regardless of Gods threatnings, contemning the warnings of Gods Prophets, and therefore the Lord threatens, that *they shall fall by the sword*, vers. 10.

3. The Prophet having before used *Driving Motives*, drawn from the Judgements of God, comes now to *Drawing Motives*, taken from the mercies and comfortable promises of God. Before he had brought them to Mount *Ebal*, the Mount of cursing; but now he brings them to Mount *Gerizim*, the Mount of Blessing. Before he had clothed with legal Menaces, and dreadful Comminations, now he clothes his Prophecy with Gospel-mercies, and Evangelical consolations.

1. He tells them that an elect remnant should be saved in the midst of their calamities, all better dayes should come under the Gospel. Though the Lord were resolved to punish the

body

body of that rebellious Nation, yet he would not utterly destroy them all, but would preserve some because of his Covenant; and though they might be sifted, tossed and tried with many afflictions, and go into captivity as well as others; yet not one grain should fall to the ground, nor any one of Gods elect perish eternally, *vers.* 8, 9.

2. Here is the happy Restauration of the Church in Gospel-times set forth 1. Under the type of *raising up the Tabernacle of David which is fallen*, vers. 11. Though the house of *David*, and the men of *Judah* and *Israel* were sorely shattered, and sunk very low by reason of their captivity, and other miseries, which lay upon them; so that they were like a Tabernacle fallen down, or a Garden laid upon, the fence being broken down; yet in Christ the true heir of *David*, it should in Gospel-times be restored and repaired.

3. According to the custome of the Prophets in Old-Testament times, he prophesieth of the glory and happiness of the Church, which he sets forth by the magnificence and affluence of outward blessings, typifying thereby those spiritual mercies which God would give to the elect remnant after their sufferings.

1. He promiseth that the Nations should be subdued under them, and their bounds should be inlarged by taking in the Gentiles in these Gospel-times into communion with them, *vers.* 12.

2. Great plenty in their fields and Vineyards, *vers.* 13, 14.

3. Re-edifying of their ruined Cities, *vers.* 14.

4. Returning from captivity and banishment, and re-establishment in their own Land, in despight of all their enemies, *vers.* 15.

Object. *But 'tis impossible, that ever such things should have fallen.*

Answ. To men who are led by sense and carnal reason, these things may seem impossible; but no the Almighty all things are possible. Now 'tis he that undertakes the work, and 'tis he that will effect it in his due time. 'Tis I that will bring them again, and I will plant them in the Land that I have given them, even I will do this, saith the Lord Almighty, who am *Thy God* in covenant with thee.

Verse 1.

I saw the Lord standing upon the Altar, &c.

THe destruction of this people was shadowed out before, by four visions; This is the fifth and last, by which the Prophet confirms that Commination which he had published in the precedent chapters.

The better to confirm the truth and authority of what he should speak, he begins first with his usual Preface, *Amos* 1. 1. & 8. 1. *I saw the Lord*, the King of Kings, and supream Monarch of all the world, whom *Israel* and *Judah* have provoked to wrath with their Idolatry; him, I say, *I saw* in a trance or Prophetical vision, *standing*, which implies two things, 1. That he was ready to depart from this rebellious people, his gracious presence should now no longer abide amongst them. 2. *Stand we wonder*, he stands ready to pronounce the final sentence against them, and to execute his righteous judgement on them, so *Amos* 7. 7. So that here is the Lords posture, *He stands*.

See *Patrick*, Jewish Hypoc. ch. 9. sl. 8. p. 28.

2. Here is the place where he stands, *viz.* *upon the Altar*. Here two great Questions will arise. 1. How could *Amos* see God, when 'tis said, *No man hath seen God at any time*, and none can see him and live, *Exod.* 33. 20. *John* 1. 18. yet *Amos* is said to see God and live?

Answ. The Answer is easie. There is a twofold seeing of God. 1. As he is in himself in his transcendent glory and essence, and thus no mortal man cloathed with flesh and blood, and clogged with humane infirmities, can see God and live; it would overwhelm him, and he could not bear it, 1 *Tim.* 6. 16. 1 *Joh* 4. 12. but in the life to come we shall see him clearly as he is, 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. 1 *John* 3. 2.

See this point excellently cleared by Dr. *Arrowsmith* on John 1. 18.

2. There is a seeing of him in this life darkly, in his word and works, and visionarily, by visions, paternal apparitions, signs and sights; such as our infirmities will bear; and thus he appeared to *Amos*, to *Abraham*, to *Isaiah*, *chap.* 6. 1. Ezek. 1. 1. & 43. 3, 4. *Daniel* and others. These saw the Lord in Visions, but not in his Essence.

A second Quere is, *What is meant by the Altar here?*

Ans.

Ans. Here Interpreters are divided. Some conceive that *Amos* living at *Bethel*, and being sent to preach principally to the ten Tribes, saw the Lord standing upon some Idolatrous Altar, at *Dan* or *Bethel* (not by way of approbation, but intending its destruction) as ready to do execution there, throwing down the Altar, and its worshippers. But 'tis probable, that the Lord would not so far countenance those Idolatrous places, as to shew any vision, or utter any Oracle there, where the Devil was worshipped, 2 *Chron.* 11. 15.

Others upon better grounds, do interpret it of Gods standing on the Brazen Altar, which was in *Solomons* Temple in *Jerusalem*, which being without the Temple in the Inner Court, may intimate Gods beginning to forsake his Temple and people; and that there was no hope of pardon left, seeing the place of propitiation was by God converted into a seat of Justice, he standing upon the Altar of burnt-offerings, as it were to slay the men of those times, whose provocations he could no longer bear; and albeit the Prophet was principally sent to *Israel*, yet he many times takes in *Judah* with them (as I have shewed on *Amos* 6. 1.) As both had sinned, so both must suffer, and be laid in the dust; neither should their Temple in which *Judah* so much gloried, any whit avail them in the day of Gods wrath; much less should those Idol and prophane Temples of *Dan* and *Bethel* any whit avail *Israel*, which God never commanded to be buile, but alwaies abhorred as dens of Devils, 2 *Chron.* 11. 15.

4. Here is the *Vision* it self, *viz.* the destruction of *Judah* and *Israel* set forth by the smiting of the Lintel of the door, that the posts might shake; *And he said, Smite the lintel of the door, &c.* The question will be, whom doth the Lord here speak to, when he sayes, *smite?*

Answ. 1. Some conceive that he speaks to the Prophet, who was commanded to denounce judgements against them, that all might quake for fear. Others conceive that he means *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon*, who burnt the Temple, and smote the Altar. Others apply it to *Salmaneser* the King of *Assyria*, who executed Gods wrath upon *Israel*, carried them into captivity, and destroyed their Idol-Temples. These are but conjectures.

Most conceive that it was some *Angel* which the Lord had appointed

appointed as the executioner of this Judgement upon this people; hence we so often read in Scripture that God made use of Angels for such ends.

5. Here is the work that this Angel must do. *He must smite the lintel of the door of the Temple*; The gate of the Temple had a threshold and posts, and over the threshold in the frontispeece was elegant work, 1 *King.* 6. 33, 34, 35.

The Greeks call it ὑπέρθυρον, *ab* ὑπὲρ *super* & θύρα *janua.*

By the *Lintel* here is meant the Transome, or Head-peece over the door, *Exod.* 12. 22. The word also signifies an Apple or Pomegranate, that stood peradventure on the top of the Temple or Porch, as is usual in magnificent structures, where they set knops or balls on the frontispeece, and upper lintels of the doors, adorned with artificial Flowers, Apples, Pomegranates, &c.

The Hebrews call it *Haccaphter, superliminare, scil. portæ Templi.*

6. Here is the manner, how the Angel must smite the lintel, not faintly and feebly, but with vehemency and courage, so that the posts and pillars may shake again. By the lintel is meant the Superiours, and by the posts which supported it, the Inferiours; all should be smitten, and made to quake again for fear; for so it follows, *Cut them in the head all of them*; where we have the *Persons* which the Angel must smite, and those are, 1. The *Heads of Israel*, that is, the Rulers Ecclesiastical and Civil. Cut them in the head, or cut them which are the head of all, *viz.* the chief and principal men in Church and State, both Princes and Priests. A cut in the body may be cured, but a cut in the head is dangerous and deadly, *Psal.* 68. 20. The Vulgar Latine mistaking the Original word, render it thus, Smite, *for Concupiscent*, the head of them all. But the word *Betsaam*, coming from *Batsa*, properly signifies to wound or cut, and Metaphorically to be covetous.

2. The Peasants and the Poor. *I will slay the last of them.* By the last or hinmost here is meant the infectious sorte of common people, who are the last and lowest of the people. Before he threatned the Head, and now he comes to the Heel. The Portal with the Pavement, all must be smitten. Cut them down (saith God to the Angel), cleave them from top to toe, from head to tail, from first to last, let none escape.

Homines infimæ classis, i.e. vilissimi & abjectissimi.

Acharitam, i.e. novissimum eorum, quod sequitur, posteritas.

Some render it thus, I will slay *the residue or posterity*; Indeed the word is homonymous, and hath divers significations

cations, sometimes it signifies the last, or that which follows; and sometimes 'tis put for posterity and children; and though it be true that God did destroy these wicked ones with their posterity; yet most genuinly the word is rendred by our Translators here, *The last of them*, as relating to the inferiour sort, and then the sense runs clear, I will slay both high and low, head and heel.

3. Here is the means by which God will destroy them; and that is, by the last and sorest of his judgements, 'tis by the sword. *Israel* shall *fall by the sword* of the *Assyrian*, and *Judah* by the sword of the *Babylonian*.

Quest. *But how are all said to be slain, when 'tis manifest that many escaped, and went onely into captivity into* Assyria *and* Chaldea?

Answ. The word *All*, in Scripture is taken two waies 1. *Collectively*, for all the body of a people. 2. *Distributively*, for some of all sorts; some rich, some poor, some high, and some low; and so the word is taken here for many, very many both in *Samaria* and *Jerusalem* shall dye for it. So that when he saith *All*, hee speaketh Hyperbolically, and means all comparatively, that is, those that escape shall be but few in comparison of those that dye. So *Phil.* 2. 21. All men seek their own, that is, the greatest part doth. See *Wilsons* Diction. on the word All.

2. We must distinguish of *slaying*: 1. There is an actual slaying and killing out-right, and so all were not slain. 2. There is a slaying in a *Civil Sense*; when a man goes into captivity, and is banisht from house and harbour, being brought very low by affliction, and this is called slaying in Scripture, *Psal.* 78. 34. and thus all *Israel* and *Judah* were slain: that is, they were carried into captivity, the one by the *Assyrian*, and the other by the *Babylonian*. *Servitus in jure equiparatur morti, vocatur & mors civilis.*

Obj. *But what do you tell us of slaying, we will hide our selves, and flee for it?*

Answ. The Prophet by a Prolepsis stops this gap, and tells them that the judgement is inevitable, flying will not avail; *For he that flyeth shall not flee away* [but shall be overtaken] *and he that escapeth of them, shall not be delivered.* They may attempt and indeavour an escape, but it shall be in vain; for Gods Justice shall quickly overtake them, and his sentence be executed on them. This doubling of the words is very emphatical, *Fugiens non effugiet nec evadet evasor.*

tical, and is more than if he had simply said, They shall finde no hiding-place.

It aggravates a mans miserie, to fly, and then be taken, and when he thinks he hath escaped the danger, then to fall into it, or a worse, is very sad; yet so 'twas here, they thought to shift for themselves, as formerly they had done, and to save themselves by flight, but now the day of their calamity was come, and they should not escape; they were ripe for ruine, and therefore the Lord tells them, that there was now no way nor hope of escaping, but they must into their enemies hands; and if any should escape one trouble, yet he should fall into another; though he escape one stroke at one time, yet he shall not be delivered from another stroke at another time; but shall be like one that fleeth from a Lion, and a Bear should meet him, *Amos* 5. 19.

The summe of all is this. *In a Vision I* Amos *saw the Lord (having left the Temple) to stand upon the Altar without, and he commanded his Angel to smite the Lintel, or Head-piece over the door of the Temple, so vehemently, that the posts thereof may shake; to signifie that fatal stroke which I will give the Rulers, both Civil and Ecclesiastical in* Israel *and* Judah: *for I have decreed to cleave them down the middle, and to smite them from top to toe, both Lintel and Threshold: both Superiours and Inferiours, all have sinned, and all shall suffer.* Israel *shall suddenly fall by the hand of the* Assyrian, *and* Judah *not long after shall go captive into* Babylon. *They are incorrigible, and therefore I am become inexorable, and their judgements are inevitable: though they fly, yet they shall not escape, no power, nor policy shall be able to deliver them from my revenging hand.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *God formerly revealed his mind to his Prophets by Types and Visions.*

I saw in a Vision (says *Amos*) but in the last dayes hee hath spoken to us more plainly and fully by his Son, *Heb.* 1. 1, 2. but of this before, on chap. 8. Ver. 1. Obs. 3.

2. *God will depart from those that depart from him.*

He will forsake those that forsake him, 2 *Chron.* 15. 2. When *Jerusalem* forsakes God, then God forsakes *Jerusalem*

salem, 2 King. 21. 13, 14. These people had forsaken God, and followed Idols, and now God stands upon the Altar ready to depart from them, and leave them in the hands of their enemies. 'Tis true, the Lord is loath to leave his people, and therefore he removes *gradually*, and by degrees from them. When he departed from *Jerusalem*, he did it not in a moment, but first he warns them by his Prophets, then he removes from the Cherub to the Threshold, *Ezek.* 9. 3. and 10. 5. Such is Gods goodness and bowels of pity to his people, that he is very unwilling to sell them into his enemies hands, if any means might prevent it, *Psal.* 81. 13, 14. *Isa.* 48. 18. *Ezek.* 18. 30, 31, 32. *Hos.* 6. 4. & 11. 8, 9. but when a people are so desperately set, then they will none of God, then he swears their ruine, *Psal.* 95. 11. This forsaking him is a great evil, and a God-provoking sin, *Jer.* 2. 12, 13. Hence old *David* counselling young *Solomon* to know and serve the Lord, useth this Motive amongst the rest; *If thou seek him, he will be found of thee, but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever*, 1 Chron. 28. 9.

3. *Judgement usually begins at the house of God.*

It begins at the Sanctuary, *Ezek.* 9. 6. 1 *Pet.* 4. 17. the higher in priviledges, the neerer to judgement, *Dan.* 9. 12. *Amos* 3. 2. *Mat.* 11. 23. The neerer to God, the more do our sins dishonour him, and therefore he begins with such, 2 *Sam.* 12. 7, 8. though he ends not with them. The famine began at *Joseph's* house, and then to *Egypt*. The *Israelites* went first into captivity, and after the *Assyrians* were destroyed by the *Medes* and *Persians*: so *Jer.* 25. 17, 18, 28, 29. The Lord gives the cup, first to *Jerusalem*, and then to *Egypt*, *Uz*, *Ekron*, *Edom*, *Moab*. The Posts and Pillars of the Temple door must first be smitten; and if this be done to the green tree; what shall be done to the dry? if this be done to Gods own Temple, what shall become of Idol-Temples? If the Lord spare not *Jerusalem*, but shew his impartial justice in punishing them for their sins, what shall be done to *Babylon*? See more in my Com. on Hos. 13. 15. Obs. 3.

4. *Political Rulers are the Heads of a people.*

Cut them in the Head. They are oft called so in Scripture, *Exod.* 6. 14. & 18. 25. *Numb.* 1. 16. & 14. 4. & 17. 2. *Judg.* 11. 8, 11. 2 *Sam.* 15. 17. Look what the Head is to the Body natural, that Rulers are, or ought to be to the body Political.

As the head is placed highest in the body, and sees, considers and reasons for the preservation of the body, so this word implies both dignity and duty, and should teach those who are set in place of preheminence above others, to consult for the good of their people, that they may live peaceably and piously under them, 1 *Tim.* 2. 2. Many cry up the dignity of Princes, but they should tell them of their duty also, and some cry them up as *Head of the Church*, as well as of the State; Mr. *Hart* a Popish Priest upbraids us with it, *That we take the Supremacy from the Pope, and give it to the Prince, who is less capable of it.* But the learned Dr. replies well. The Supremacy (saith he) which we take from the Pope, we give it to no mortal creature, Prince or other. But the Pope having seized on part of Christs right, and part of the Princes, &c. we have taken the Princes power from him, and given it to him to whom it was due, according to that of our Saviour, *Give to Cæsar what is Cæsars, and to God what is Gods, &c.* The Supremacy therefore which we give our Prince in things Ecclesiastical, is to deal therein as *Hezekiah* did, and not as *Uzziah*, not to preach, administer Sacraments, or practise the Discipline of the Church, but to provide that these things be done as they ought, by them whom God hath called thereto. We give to *Cæsar* no more than is *Cæsars*, Thus he. Hence 'tis that our Princes do abstain from the title of being called Heads of the Church, which is proper onely to Christ, and content themselves with the title of Supreme Governours. As for the *Pope*, he is so far from being Head of the Church, that he is rather the Tail, being indeed not so much as a sound member of it; but the Head of that Apostasie from the Faith, which was foretold, 2 *Thes.* 2. 3. Would be sad with the Church if it had no better a Head than the Popes have been, some of which have been Sodomites, Magicians, Adulterers, and gave their souls to the Devil to get the Popedome; what are the Members when the Heads are such?

See Dr. *Reynolds* against *Hart*, chap. 10. p. 669, &c. *Altare Damascenum cap.* 1. *p.* 10, *&c.* Mr. *Tombs* his Tract. about the Oath of Supremacy.

See more in *Jus Divinum Regim.* Eccles. p. 43, 44.

5. *These Heads of the people when they sin against God, shall be punisht as well as others.*

Cut them in the Head, or cut them which are the Head of all. God is no respecter of persons, but be they Head or Heel, if

if they sin against him, they cannot escape. *Tophet is prepared of old even for the King.* If the proud King of *Assria* will oppress and oppose the people of God, he must know that God hath prepared a place of punishment for such cruel Tyrants, *Isa.* 30. 33. God is terrible to the Kings of the earth, *Psal.* 76. *ult.*

See more in my Com. on Psal. 81. 1. p. 45.

6. *Universality in sin, brings universality in suffering.*

When the head and the feet, the highest and the lowest sin together, then slay them all with the sword. But of this before.

See my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. p. 109.

7. *The Angels of God oft-times are the executioners of his wrath upon wicked men.*

An Angel here must smite them in the head. The *Sodomites*, that vexed *Lot* were smitten blind by an Angel, *Gen.* 19. 11. The first-born of *Egypt* were slain by an Angel, *Exod.* 12. 23, 29. When *Balaam* was going to curse Gods people, an Angel meets him and stops him, *Numb.* 22. 22. If God will send a Pestilence on *Israel*, he hath an Angel ready to do it, 2 *Sam.* 24. 16. If he will have the Army of the *Assyrians* destroyed, an Angel shall do it, *Isa.* 33. 36. Proud *Herod* was smitten by an Angel, *Act.* 12. 23. and at the last day they shall bring the wicked to Christs bar, there to receive their final doom, *Mat.* 13. 41. Who would not then fear to offend this great and mighty God, who hath so many glorious Angels ready at the least beck of their Lord, to destroy both us and ours. As the Apostle would have women covered, and modest, because of the Angels: so I would have men good and gracious, because of the Angels, (who are grieved to see the dishonours done to their Lord and Master) that we may not provoke the Lord to send them against us for our destruction, but rather to be our Guardians to salvation.

See six good offices which the Angels do for us, in Mr *Leighs* Body of Divinity, l. 3. c. 7. p. 274. and Mr. *Loots* Sermon on Heb. 1. 14.

8. *The judgements that befall us, come from God.*

I will slay them, I will bring them down, I will search them out, I will command the Serpent to bite them, *vers.* 2, 3, 4. Whatever be the instrument, yet God is the prime Agent. Though there may be many executioners, yet there is but one prime mover of them all. *'Tis he that kills, and he that makes alive,*

alive, 1 Sam. 2. 6. 'Tis he that gives, and he that takes, *Job* 1. 21. and therefore they are called *His* Judgements, by a special propriety, as coming more immediately from him, *Isa.* 26. 8, 9. The consideration of this will keep us from murmuring and impatience, as it did *Job*, and *David*, we shall be dumb and silent when we see 'tis the Lord that doth it. How great then is their sin, that ascribe their sicknesses, losses, crosses, &c. to second causes, never looking at Gods hand, he is not in any of their thoughts.

9. *Wicked men are cowardly, fearful men, Isa.* 33. 14 *Jer.* 4. 9. When troubles come they are all for *flying*, digging into Hell, climbing the tops of mountains, getting into the depths of the Sea, hiding themselves in chambers, 1 *King.* 22. 25. When troubles come, their spirit is gone, 'tis fallen from their hearts into their heels, and they are going, yea flying from it, which is the cowards pace. They fly sometimes when they are pursued, but when none pursues them, but their own fancy, *Prov.* 28. 1. they have guilty consciences, which make them fly at the shaking of a leaf, *Levit.* 26. 36. those who are most fearless in sinning, are most fearful of suffering, *Rom.* 1. 4, 5, 6. whereas the righteous, like the valiant horse, that is prepared for the battel, rejoyceth and goeth forth to meet the armed man, *Job* 39. 19. to 26. he shall rather dye than run, if duty bids him stay and stand. When troubles come upon the wicked, their great care is how to be shut of them, and how to get out of them, and out-run them, not how to make them sanctified, or how to be bettered by them. But the godly man desires rather to have the trouble sanctified, than removed; and if he fly, 'tis to God, not from him, he is his Tower and his hiding-place, by Prayer and Faith he gets unto him, yea, into him, and so is safe, *Prov.* 18. 10.

10. *All the shifts and evasions of wicked men, shall not avail them in the day of wrath.*

Hee that fleeth, shall not flee away, *viz.* so as to escape by his flight, for he shall be overtaken. Or if he do escape one danger, yet he shall not be delivered, but he shall fall into another, *Amos* 5. 19. Flee that flees from a Lion, shall fall into the mouth of a Bear, *Isa.* 30. 26, 27. while they flee from the noise of fear, they shall fall into a pit, and when they are in the pit striving to get out, and hoping to finde deliverance

sance, then they fall into a snare, which is a worse evil than the pit; he that falls into a pit, may make some shift to get out again, but he that is in a snare, is bound fast, he can get no further, *Isa.* 24. 18. Thus the wicked mans case is worse and worse, all his remedies prove remediless, and all his helpers are miserable comforters. God is against them, and therefore salvation is far from them, *Psal.* 119. 155. and if *Jonah* will flee from God, he shall fall into the Sea. There is no escaping when God pursues, when he will destroy, none shall be able to deliver, *Psal.* 22. 8. & 139. 7. to 11. *Jer.* 4. 16, 17. *Amos* 2. 14, 15, 16. *Obad.* 4. He hath many under officers to arrest us, *Ezek.* 14. 13. so that there is no escaping his hand, *Job* 10. 7. No power nor policy can save us from his wrath, *Prov.* 21. 30. No place can hide us from his All-seeing-eye, nor secure us from his All-mighty-hand, as appears in the next verses.

See Mr. *Jenkins* on Jude 14. Obs. 2. p. 204. folio.

VERSE 2.

Though they dig into Hell, thence shall mine hand take them, though they climbe up to Heaven, thence will I bring them down.

THese Apostatizing Israelites being puft up with their Priviledges, conceiting that God loved them, because he had given them some success and victories; hereupon they grew secure and impenitent, promising themselves impunity in their sins, which makes the Prophet here to thunder out Gods dreadful judgements against them with vehemency and variety of words, and to use very lofty and hyperbolical expressions, the better to awaken them, and drive them out of their vain conceits. In the end of the fore-going verse he had shewed them, that *though they fled, yet they should not escape*; and this he proves in the three following verses, by a notable enumeration of five particular places, thereby shewing them that they should not escape, though they hid themselves:

1. In Hell.
2. In Heaven.
3. In the tops of inaccessible Mountains.
4. In the bottome of the Sea.
5. In captivity and banishment out of their own

own Land, yet there the Lord would command the sword, and it should slay them. They should be safe neither at home, nor abroad, neither in their own Country, nor yet in a strange Land: so sad it is for a people to have God for their enemy.

1. The first means whereby they thought to hide themselves from Gods revenging hand, was by digging and *taking great pains* to hide themselves as low as Hell. We have the same word used, *Jonah* 1. 13. where the Mariners are said to row hard, to save *Jonah*, the word is *Jachteru*, they digged in the Sea by rowing, that is, they used the utmost means to save him.

Quest. *The Question will be, What is here meant by Hell and Heaven?*

Answ. 1. Some take the words literally, thus, If it were possible for these incorrigible sinners to descend into Hell, or ascend up into Heaven, yet Gods hand of Justice should finde them out in the one, and cast them out of the other.

2. Others take the words in an Hyperbolical sense, thus, By *Hell*, they understand the most abstruse, deep, secret places of the earth. The word *Sheol*, hath many significations. 1. Sometimes 'tis put for the grave, *Gen.* 37. 35. *Psal.* 16. 10. 2. Sometimes 'tis put for Hell it self, as *Job* 11. 8. & 26. 6. 3. Here it signifies the lowest part of the earth, and nearest to the center.

See the word *Sheol* opened by Dr. *Rivet*, on Psal. 16. 10. and *Caryl* on Job 7. 9. p 615.

Sheol hic pro centro terræ ponitur. Calvin.

q. d. Though these wicked men should dig ditches or pits never so deep in the earth to hide themselves, so that they should get almost as low as Hell, yet this digging and delving should not avail them, nor be able to shelter them from Gods wrath; for even thence would God take them, and deliver them into their enemies hands to be slain. Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering, Job 26. 6. Prov. 15. 11. Let *Adam* hide himself amongst the trees, and *Jonah* lye never so close to the sides of the ship, yet Gods Almighty hand found out both the one and the other.

3. If this will not do, and Hell will afford no help, they'l climbe *to Heaven*, and try what that will do, but all in vain; for thence will God cast them down, that the *Assyrian* may slay them. The like Hyperbolical speeches of mounting up to Heaven, we read of, *Gen.* 11. 4. *Deut.* 1. 28. *Job* 20. 6. *Jer.* 49. 16. & 51. 53. *Obad.* 4.

Some

Some by *Heaven* understand high and lofty Refuges and Towers, whose tops seemed to touch the Heavens, *q. d. Let these wicked men seek for refuge in Heaven, or Hell, above or beneath, in Sea or Land, yet they shall not secure them in this day of wrath; all their hearts, their holes, and hiding-places are naked before the eyes of him with whom they have to do.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *When God is against a people, no place can shelter them from his wrath.*

If men sin against the Lord, let them go whither they will, the punishment of their sin will finde them out, *Numb.* 32. 23. Though insolent *Edom* make his nest in the Stars, and think himself out of Gun shot, and free from danger, yet his sins will bring him down, *Obad.* 4. God hath a sharp eye, and a strong hand to pull men out of their strong holds, or to destroy them in them. *Zimri* got into *Tirzah* a fortified City, and then into the Kings Palace, and there he burnt himself to death, 1 *King.* 16. 8. Had we all the power and policy of all the Kingdomes of the Earth for us, yet if God be against us, these cannot help us, *Amos* 2. 14, 15, 16. Though the wicked mount on high, yet at last hee casts them down to the ground, *Psal.* 147. 6. 'Tis not height nor depth, Sea or Land, Heaven or Hell that can shelter us from Gods fury. If God be against us, all the elements, and all the creatures are against us. As when God is for us, all are for us, *Rom.* 8. 31. and we need not fear. *Psal.* 27. 1. & 56. 4. *Isa.* 43. 1, 2.

There is no flying from Gods Arrests, if a man have done wickedly in one place, he may escape the Law by flying to another, he may get out of our bounds, and then he is safe; but who can get out of Gods bounds? he hath power to arrest us where ever he findes us, and he can finde us where ever we are. He is higher than Heaven, and deeper than Hell, and therefore *David* cryes out, *Whither shall I go from thy presence?* Surely no whither. Neither men nor Devils are able to go from the common and general presence of God, for he fills Heaven and Earth. *Psal.* 139. 7. to 13. is a kinde of Comment on this Text, and therefore I shall briefly open it, *vers.* 7.

Whither ſhall I go from thy Spirit? what's that? why he tells you in the next clauſe, *Whither ſhall I flee from thy preſence?* *q. d.* Thou art an infinite Spirit, and I can go no where to avoid or eſcape thee, *Verſ.* 8. *If I aſcend into Heaven, thou art there*; By Heaven is meant the upper Region of the world, and *if I make my bed in Hell, and go down to the loweſt parts of the earth, behold thou art there*, *q.d.* Let mee go whither I will, thy preſence will finde mee out.

Verſ. 9. *If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the utmoſt parts of the world*, *q. d.* ſhould I fly never ſo early or ſwiftly from Eaſt to Weſt, as the light of the morning doth, *verſ.* 10. *Even there ſhould thy hand lead mee, and thy right hand ſhould hold mee*, *q. d.* I ſhould ſtill lye under thy divine diſpoſing and government, and finde thee efficaciouſly preſent with mee.

Verſ. 11. If I ſay the darkneſs ſhall cover mee, *viz.* ſo as thou ſhalt not be able to finde mee out, *then is the night light about mee*, that is, I ſhall be as little hid from thine eyes, as if 'twere noon day; why ſo? *verſ.* 12. for the darkneſs hideth not from thee, but the night ſhineth as the day, darkneſs and light are both alike to thee, *Job* 34. 11, 12.

Verse 3.

And though they hide themſelves in the top of Carmel, I will ſearch and take them out thence, and though they be hid from my ſight in the bottome of the Sea, thence will I command the Serpent, and he ſhall bite them.

THe men of *Iſrael* and *Judah* being ſottiſh and ſenſual, and drowned in deep ſecurity, reſting upon their carnal confidences, and reſolving to fly to them inſtead of God: The holy Ghoſt (who knows our indurate frames better than we our ſelves) multiplies words, and as Fiſhers when they would catch Fiſh, drive them out of their holds; ſo the Lord here labours to drive them out of all their ſtrong holds, to himſelf. Having therefore ſhewed them that Heaven and Hell could afford them no ſecurity, he comes now to ſtop a third gap, by which they might think to eſcape, *viz.* by flying to Rocks, and inacceſſible Mountains. But, *though they hide them-*

themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence, and deliver them into their enemies hands.

There were two *Carmels*. The one was in *Judea*, as appears, *Josh.* 15. 55. 1 *Sam.* 25. 2. the other in the Text was an high, pleasant, fruitful Mountain in *Canaan*, good for Pasturage, and therefore is used in Scripture sometimes *Largely*, for any fertile place; so *Isa.* 29. 17. *Jer.* 2. 7. *Amos* 1. 2. I brought you into a plentiful Country, or as it is in the fountain, I brought you into a Land of *Carmel*. So *Cant.* 7. 5.

2. 'Tis taken *strictly*, for that famous, fruitful Mountain, which is joyned with *Bashan* another fruitful hill, *Isa.* 33. 9. This *Carmel* had a City on it, or joyning to it, and was situate by the Sea, *Jer.* 46. 18. Here *Elijah* vanquisht the worshippers of *Baal*, 1 King. 18. 19. and *Elisha* dwelt here, 2 *King.* 4. 25. By *Carmel* here is meant Synecdochically, very high hills, and inaccessible Rocks and Mountains, for in those times, and in those Countries, when they were in great danger, they were wont to run and hide themselves in Mountains, in Caves, in Rocks, in Pits, and high places, as appears, *Judg.* 6 2. 1 *Sam.* 13. 6. *Isa.* 2. 10, 19. *Jer.* 4. 29. But in vain do men run to these hills and holds for refuge, for if God be not our strong hold, they are but miserable shelters, and we may say of them, as *Job* said of his friends, *Miserable comforters are yee all.* We read of five Kings that hid themselves in a cave, yet were they all taken and hanged, *Josh.* 10. 16, 23. *Titus* and *Vespatian* besieging *Jerusalem*, found many of the Jews hid in Vaults and Privy-houses, and other obscure places, where they were slain. Those that sin against the Lord, let them go to the very head and top of *Carmel* to hide themselves, yet there *will the Lord search for them*, and bring them forth to Judgement. Mountains are Gods servants as well as other creatures, yea they melt like wax at his presence, so that although wicked men should beg of them to fall upon them, and hide them, they cannot, they dare not do it, *Rev.* 6. 15, 16, 17.

'Tis true, *David* oft made use of Mountains and Caves, but he never trusted in them, but made the Lord his Rock and Refuge, *Psal.* 18. 2. and the best of Saints have hid themselves as occasion required. But for impenitent sinners to think to hide themselves from Gods hand and eye, is gross Atheism and madness.

Obj. *But if we cannot hide our selves in Mountains, we will try what the deeps will do.*

Ans. You may do so; but it shall be in vain; *for though they hide themselves from my sight, in the bottome of the Sea*, that is, though they think they have hid themselves from my sight, so that I cannot see nor finde them; for no man can *actually* hide himself from God, who is omnipresent, but only *opinionatively*, and in his own conceit.

'Tis an Hyperbole, *q. d.* If it were possible for those wicked men to go to the very bottome, and *Pavement* of the Sea to hide themselves from mine eye and hre; yet there mine eye would see them, and my hand should reach them, for I have Serpents and Serjeants even there ready to arrest them, and fulfil my commands.

Karka, Pavimentum, fundum, solum.

Thence will I command the Serpent and he shall bite them.

By Serpent here is not meant a Land-Serpent, but a Sea-Serpent, as the Crocodile, or the Leviathan, that is, the Whale, or some such great Sea-monster, for so we finde the Whale in Job 26. 13. called the crooked or piercing-Serpent. God hath many Serpents at command. He hath Serpents *Natural*, to bite and devour us, and Serpents *Metaphorical*, as the Devil and his Agents, he hath the *Assyrian* and *Babylonian* here to devoure *Israel* and *Judah*.

Nachash, Serpens. Syn. Gen.

Mandabo monstro alicui marino, quale Hebrai & Chaldai Serpentum & Draconum appellant novimus, per talia monstra reges crudeles intelligunt. PGl. 74. 14. *Grotius.*

q. d. Which way soever these wicked men go, death and destruction shall finde them out, all shall make against them both by Sea and Land, and the Assyrian *my Rod and Executioner shall finde and ferret them out in all places where ever they be.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *God hath variety of Servants and Serjeants to arrest his enemies where ever they be.*

All the Elements, and all the Creatures are enemies to those that are enemies to God. He hath Armies at Sea and Land against them. He hath not onely Serpents *Metaphorical*, the Devil and his Instruments, *Rev.* 12. 9. but also *natural* Serpents, and Sea-monsters innumerable, ready to execute

his

his commands on his enemies. God is the best friend, and the saddest foe. If he be against us, he is an Omnipresent enemy, and can pursue us by Sea and Land; for he is every where by his Essence, Presence and Power. He is God above all, through all, and in us all, *Job* 11. 8, 9. *Ephes.* 4. 6. He is *over all* by his Power, *in all* the Saints by his Spirit, and *through all* the world by his providence. He is an Omnipresent Essence and Being, *Prov.* 15. 3. There is no hiding our selves in secret from him, *Jer.* 23. 23, 24. He is in *Heaven* by his glory and Majesty; in *Hell* by his justice, wrath and power; in Sea and Land by his providence, *Act.* 17. 27.

Take heed then of displeasing him, other enemies you may flye from; but there is no flying from his presence. Walk therefore sincerely as in his eye, as *Enoch*, *Noah*, and *Abraham* did. *Seneca* counselled his scholars to do all, *tanquam spectante Cato*, as if some severe *Cato* did alwaies behold them. But we should rather do all, *tanquam spectet Deus*, remembring his All-seeing eye is still upon us. This is an excellent preservative against sin. This kept *Joseph* chaste, *Gen.* 39. 9. and *Job* and *David*, pure, *Job* 31. 4. *Psal.* 119. 136. I have kept all thy precepts, why so? *because all my waies are before thee*, Heb. 4. 13.

See this point excellently enlarged, by Mr. *Caryl* on Job 22. 12. p. 108. to 115. and Mr. *Love* on 2 Chro. 16. 9.

'Tis meer Atheism, and the want of consideration of that All-seeing eye of God, which is the root of all the villany that is acted in the world, *Psal.* 94. 5, 6, 8. *Ezek.* 9. 9. As *Nimrod* was said to be *a mighty hunter before the Lord*; so many may be said, to be mighty drunkards, mighty swearers, lyars, cheaters, dissemblers, &c. before the Lord. But let it alwaies be our care to lead a life worthy of such a presence, passing the time of our sojourning in Gods fear. This may be 1. A spur to duty, 2. A motive to Sincerity, 3. A corrosive to sin, 4. A cordial in afflictions. Remember in all thy distresses, hee is an Omnipresent friend. He was with *Joseph* in the prison, with *Jeremy* in the dungeon, with *Jonah* in the Whales belly, with *Daniel* in the Lions den, with *Israel* in *Egypt*, *Exod.* 3. 9. and with *Paul* before *Nero*, 2 Tim. 4. 17. He knows our Tentations, our adversaries, our abilities, and will not suffer us to be tempted above our strength, *Rev.* 2. 3.

VERSE 4.

And though they go into captivity before their enemies, thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them, and I will set mine eye upon them for evil, and not for good.

WEE are now come to the fifth and last Evasion, whereby these incorrigible sinners thought to escape Gods hands, and that was by yeelding themselves up into their enemies hands upon quarter for their lives, and so to escape the edge of the sword.

To this the Lord answers by way of concession, though they should go into captivity before their enemies, or before the faces of their enemies (as 'tis in the Original) whose custome it was to drive their enemies like beasts before them, young and old, naked and barefoot, *Isa.* 20. 4. *Lam.* 1. 5. yet thence will I command and commission the sword of their enemies to slay them.

2. Here is an Aggravation of all this misery, *viz.* that it should fall upon them in wrath. God promised to send *Judah* into the Land of *Chaldea* for good, *Jer.* 24. 5, 6. but *Israel* being more grosly wicked, the Lord threatens here, *To watch over them for evil, and not for good.* The expression is emphatical, the denial of the contrary makes the speech more weighty, so *Jer.* 21. 10. & 39. 16. & 44. 27. *q. d.* I will bring upon them all manner of evil, but no good. I will afflict them every where, but I will defend them no where, but will utterly consume them. This was true of *Israel*, who went into captivity, and never returned again; though many of *Judah* did return again, as we read in the book of *Ezra*.

Negatio illa, Et non in bonum, Magnam habet auxēsin, q. d. Nil boni, sed omne malum iis afferam & infligam. à Lapide.

As Gods eye was formerly upon them for good, and hee had made them the head of the Nations, so now his eye should be upon them for evil, and he would make them the Taile and contemptible amongst all. He would now deal with them as he threatned to do with disobedient ones, *Deut.* 28. 44, 63. Before he had been their Guardian, and their Keeper, *Psal.* 121. 3,4. He that keeps *Israel* neither slumbers nor sleeps; but now he will be their Judge and Executioner. Though formerly he

he seriously and intensively set himself to do them good, yet now with as much seriousness and resolvedness he will set his eyes upon them, or against them for evil.

By the *Eye of God* is meant the Providence of God, by an Anthropopathy frequent in Scripture, *Job* 34.21. *Prov.* 15.3. *Psal.* 33.18. & 34.15. 1 *Pet.* 3.12. which as it watcheth over the good in mercy, so it watcheth over the wicked in judgement, *vers.* 8.

I will set mine eye upon them for evil; that is, for punishment, and for destruction, *and not for good*; that is, not to do them any good at all, nor to bless them.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Submission to men is but vain, unless we submit unto God.*

To yeeld our selves captives to men? and make peace with them, and yet to rebel against God, is to see the Serjeant, and to lye open to the fury of the Creditor. Wicked men begin at the wrong end, they should first begin with God, and humble themselves before him, and make peace with him and then all would be at peace with them, *Job* 5.23. *Hos.* 2.18. When once our wayes please God, he makes our enemies to be at peace with us, *Prov.* 16.7. He can over-rule their hearts, so that although they hate us, yet they shall not hurt us; yea with *Esau*, they shall kiss us, instead of killing us, *Gen.* 33.4.

2 *The sword hath its command and commission from God*, Jer. 47.6. Ezek. 14.17. *I will command the sword, and it shall slay them.*

War is one of Gods sore Judgements, it is the Arrow which he shoots at a rebellious people. But of this at large before on *Amos* 4.10.

3 *The Providence of God watcheth over the wicked for their hurt.*

As the eyes of his Providence run to and fro through the whole world for the good of his people (2 *Chron.* 16.9. *Psal.* 33.18. and 34.15. 1 *Pet.* 3.12.) so where ever the wicked go, his eye and his hand follow them for evil, *Jer.* 44. 16, 17, 18, 22. and 24.9. As all works together for good to good men, so all works for evil to evil men. The Lord doth

even

even study their ruine, and purposely watch (as twere) all opportunities to do them a mischief.

As men do obstinately set their faces against Gods Commandements in a way of rebellion; so he will set his face against them for evil in a way of destruction, *Jer.* 44. 11. Hence we read so oft of Gods *setting his face against wicked men*, Lev. 20.3. and 26.17. Ezek. 14.8. *I will set my face against them*, that is, I am highly offended with them, and I will make it my work to execute my vengeance on them.

Ver. 5.

And the Lord God of Hosts is he that toucheth the Land and it shall melt, and all that dwell therein shall mourn, and it shall rise up wholly like a flood, and shall be drowned as by the flood of Egypt.

WE have done with the Commination, we are now come to the second general part of the Chapter, and that is *the confirmation of the Commination*, which is drawn from the Omnipotent Majesty and Power of God, who is Lord Paramount of all the world, the glorious Creator and Governour of all. All depend upon him, and observe his beck, what he sayes it is done (*ejus dicere est facere*) and what he threatens is as easily and speedily effected.

The better therefore to awaken these drousie sinners, and make them fear, the Prophet here sets forth the Majesty and Power of God, that they might see there was no contending with him, and that he was able, and would certainly bring to pass what ever he had threatned against them. To this end we often finde *Moses* and the Prophets setting forth the Majesty of God by his Titles & Works, as that he *is the Mighty God, the Lord of Hosts, the King of Kings, &c.* Sinners are hardly drawn to consider the Glory and Majesty of that God with whom they have to do, and therefore the Prophet so oft toucheth on this string, *Amos* 3.6.8. and 4. *ult.* and 5.8,9.

In this Verse, and the next, we have an elegant description of Gods Power and Glory (where every word hath its weight) And that 1 By his Names and Titles, He is *the Lord*, Jehovah, the Creator and Preserver of all things; and there-

fore

fear his Threatnings, ought you to be unconcerned. 2 His is the Lord of Hosts, he hath the superiour and inferiour Armies of Heaven and Earth, of Sea and Land, as it were, horse and foot to march against his enemies.

3 His Almighty *Works* set forth his Majesty and Power. 1 The *Earth* which is in it self a most solid, firm, hard, immoveable body, yet acknowledgeth the Power and Dominion of its Almighty Lord and Creator; and therefore if he do but touch it (at least with any of his rods, and in displeasure) it presently melts like wax before the fire, or snow before the Sun. 2 If he be provoked to anger, he can make a sinful land to mourn, by bringing upon them the punishment due to them for their sins; he can make both things and persons melt. Therefore fear to offend him; this must be annexed to every branch of this description of God, *e.g.* He is Jehovah the Lord of Hosts, therefore fear him. He makes the earth to melt, and the inhabitants thereof to tremble, therefore do you humble your selves before him. 3 If all this will not work upon you, yet consider he can drown you, and make his floods to go over all the land, as he did in *Noahs* time, and as he doth in many Islands, and other places at this day. See before Chap. 8. 8.

Tamog, propriè significat liquescere, resolvi, ut cera ad ignem.

4 If ye will not fear him for his Majesty, and Power that appears on earth, then look up to the *heavens*, vers. 6. and see his Wisdome and Power there, in creating the several Regions of the air, as so many stories one above another; besides the variety of creatures which he hath on earth, as so many Troops ready prest to do him service; and his sending of the waters of the Sea upon the earth, either by rain, or inundation to punish it. These all shew the Power and Glory of that God with whom we have to do, and therefore should make us fear to offend him, and speedily to make our peace with him.

The summe of all is this; *Hitherto ye have crusted in your own strength and priviledges, and have set light by Gods Threatnings, as if they had been but so many scar-crows; but now consider, O ye infirm, and sinful dust and ashes, against whom do ye rebel, against whom do ye thus harden your selves? Is it not against the great and mighty God, the Lord of Hosts, the Creator of all things, whose Almighty power appears in that*

with a touch he can make the mighty and massy earth to melt and dissolve like wax before a mighty fire, and fill it with such horror, that all the inhabitants thereof shall mourn, and make it as inhabitable as if it were drowned with a flood?

OBSERVATIONS.

See Trap on Mal. 3. 17.

1. *God is the Lord of Hosts.* See before *Amos* 4. *ult.*

2. *He is an Almighty God.* See before *Amos* 4. *ult.* Obs. 1.

3. *If God do but touch the earth, or its inhabitants in wrath, they melt, and mourn, and fade away.*

If he but touch Mountains *Natural*, or Mountains *Metaphorical*, there is no abiding.

1 The earth *Natural* quakes at Gods displeasure, the Rocks and Hills melt at his presence, 2 *Sam.* 22. 8. *Psal.* 18. 7. and 144. 5, 6, 7. The massy Mountains which no art or wit of man can move, yet Gods bare presence, how much more his wrathful presence makes them tremble as Mount *Sinai* did at the presence of the Lord, *Exod.* 19. 18. *Judg.* 5. 5. *Job* 9. 6. *Psal.* 68. 8. *Hab.* 3. 10.

See Caryl on Job 9. 6. p. 184.

2 The earth *Metaphorical*; that is, wicked men that live in the earth; the guilt of their sins doth so daunt them that they are not able to stand in Gods presence, *Exod.* 9. *ult.* *Adam* when he had sinned, hides himself from God, and *Cain* runs from his presence. Especially at the day of Judgement they will not be able to stand before Gods Tribunal, *Psal.* 1. 5. but will cry to Rocks and Mountains to hide them, and shall be driven to utter desperation, when they think of that dreadful sentence, *Go ye cursed*; yea when the Lord appears for his people here, these Metaphorical Mountains shall be dissolved, and melt like wax before the fire. The Churches enemies are oft compared to Mountains *Isa.* 64. 1. *Zac.* 4. 7.

See Caryl on Job 30. 22. p. 208, 209.

1. Because Mountains are higher than other parts of the earth, so are the wicked puffed up with pride, and think themselves higher than God himself, and therefore they set their mouths against the Heavens and blaspheme him, *Psal.* 73. 9. 2. Mountains hinder us in our way. 3. They are barren, it is the low Valleys that are fruitful.

The Church being troubled with these Mountains, seeks to re-

remove them, by that Omnipotent Engine of Prayer, *Isa. 64. 1, 2. Oh that thou wouldst rend the Heavens and come down!* what than? why the Mountains, that is, the Princes and Potentates of the world, that now are puft up with success, opposing and oppressing the people of God, should melt at thy presence, and vanish to nothing.

Montes sunt Principes & Potestates mundi, qui plus quam ferres sunt cum stutiunt successum; at cum Deus visitat eos, sunt meliores aqua; contemnunt Deum ut infimum, quasi scens nos in antro, sed ille in Templo latens; sed age & ascende angustiorem fidem. Utinam disciudores cœlum, & descenderes. Luther in Isa. 64. 1.

When God ariseth, then the Dukes of *Edom* are amazed, and trembling takes hold on the mighty ones, *Exod. 15. 15, 16.* Hence 'tis that the Church desires that God would arise, for then his enemies should be scattered, and those that hate him should flee before him, and *be driven away like smoke* (which the higher it riseth, the more 'tis scattered) *and melt like wax before the fire*, Psal. 68. 1, 2. The Sons of *Zeruiah* may be too strong for *David*, but not for the God of *David*. If he do but touch these Mountains, they vanish. 'Tis no trouble to us to breathe; why God can with as great facility overthrow the Churches enemies, one blast, breath, word, or look from him, undoes them, *Job 4. 9, 10, 11. By the blast of God they perish, and by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed.* And if the Earth melt and tremble when God is angry, how sad is the condition of hard-hearted sinners, who are viler than the Earth, and more insensible than the very senseless and inanimate creatures, yea worse than the very Devils themselves, for they beleeve and tremble! *James 2. 19.*

4. *The Lord can turn our Land into a Sea*, and make our arrable, sailable; so that there shall be no dwelling in it; but it shall rise up wholly as a flood, and shall be drowned as by the flood of *Egypt*. The water is naturally above the earth, so that he can float it and flood it at his pleasure; and can easily pull up his sluces, and let in the Sea upon us, and bury us in one universal grave of waters. Let us then fear to provoke him, who hath Wind and Sea at command against us. The Lord wonders that any should be so sordish, as not to fear him upon this very account, *Jer. 5. 22. Fear ye not me, saith the Lord, who have placed the Sand for a bound to the Sea, that it cannot pass?* q. d. Whom will ye fear, if ye will not fear mee? when the Sea it self, that terrible and tumultuous creature

feareth and obeyeth; and who have made the weak sands to bound the raging Sea. We are bound to bless God that hath thus bounded that unruly element, and saith to it, *Hitherto shalt thou go, and no further, and here shall thy proud waves be staid*, Job 38. 11, 12.

VERSE 6.

It is he that buildeth his stories in the Heavens, and hath founded his troop in the Earth; hee that calleth for the waters of the Sea, and powreth them out upon the face of the Earth, The Lord is his Name.

THE Prophet goes on in a magnificent description of the Wisdome, Power, Majesty, and Glory of the great *Jehovah*, that so this stubborn people, considering with whom they had to do, might tremble at his Threatnings, and prepare to meet him in a way of humiliation, who was now marching against them with his troops for their destruction.

Before he had set forth Gods All-mighty Power in ruling *the Earth and the Rivers*, now he proceeds to set forth his Majesty in the creating of the Heavens, of the inferiour Armies and the Seas.

And since the bare naming of God is little regarded by most men, therefore this blunt, rustick Prophet raiseth his stile, grows Rhetorical and Philosophical, setting forth Gods excellency with variety of words, the better to affect his Hearers.

Quot tituli, tot simuli. In this Ver we have the glory of God set forth to us in his forming & framing
1. The Stories of Heaven.
2. His Troops on Earth.
3. The Rain out of the Sea.
4. By his tremendous Name, *Jehovah*.

The words are very Mystical, and difficult, they have almost as many Expositions as there be Expositors. I shall indeavour to clear the way, and lay a good foundation, the building will stand the better.

He buildeth his stories in the Heavens.

The first Query will be, What is meant here by *the stories of Heaven?* Answ.

Answ. By *Heaven* here is meant, the *Aire*; hence the birds are called the fouls of Heaven, and by *Stories* are meant, the heavenly Sphears or Orbs, which are distinct *ascents* (as 'tis in the Original) and Stories one above another. We read of three Heavens.

Magnolatau, ascentiones suas; vel gradus suos, à Gnalah ascendit. The Sphears being one above another, are elegantly called Stories.

1. There is the *Aerial Heaven*, which reacheth from us to the Stars, in which there are three Regions.

2. There is the *Starry Heaven*, which hath eight Sphears (which who lists may finde set down in a known Author.)

Mr. *Leighs* Body of Divinity, l. 3. c. 3. p. 235; & c. *Polan. Synt.* l. 5. c. 8, 9.

3. There is the *Heaven of Heavens*, or the third Heaven, 2 *Cor.* 12. 2. The first of these is for my *Sustentation*, I live and breathe in it. The second is for my *Contemplation*, I see and admire it; and the third is my *Expectation*, I long and wait for it.

By this most admirable and excellent work of God, in making the Heavens, which consist of so many Sphears, and have a certain order within themselves, and are as it were so many steps and stairs by which we ascend *gradatim*, till we come to the Heaven of Heavens, the Prophet labours to awaken these secure sinners. This is the first Glass in which we may clearly see the Majesty of God, *Job* 37. 18.

And hath founded his Troop in the Earth.

The word which we render *Troop*, signifies not onely a Troop, as appears by that parallel place, 2 *Sam.* 2. 25. *The children of* Benjamin *gathered themselves together after* Abner, *and became, Laagudda* (the very word in the Text) *one Troop*; or were gathered round together like a Globe. 2. The word also signifies a little *Bundle*; So *Isa.* 58. 6. *Undo the heavy burdens*, or undo the bundels or fardels.

Agudda, fasciculus, conglobatio, turma, à Gudah, colligere.

1. Some by a Troop understand the other three Elements of Fire, Air, Water; which are all bound up as were in one bundle, and founded upon the Earth, which is the basis and centre of them all. Hence the *Geneva* render it, He hath laid the foundation of his Globe of Elements in the Earth. Those three Elements are opposite to the heavenly sphears, *q. d.* as God hath built the glorious sphears of Heaven, so he hath founded the terrestrial Sphears and Elements in the Earth, out

of which he hath formed and framed all other things; uniting them in a due series and order, and binding them up as it were in one bundle, the Elements lying like globes or bundles, one upon, or over one another.

2. Others conceive, that by a *Troop* here, is meant all kinds of creatures, which are as so many Troops on Earth to serve God; hence he is so oft called, *The Lord of Hosts*, and these are called *His* Troops, because he is the Author and the Orderer of their Motion, *q. d.* As the Lord hath built the several Contignations of his Orbs in the Heavens, so he hath provided Armies of creatures to do his will on Earth.

Hic designantur hominum & rerum creatarum turmæ à Domino Zebaoth ita comparatæ, ut quocunque velit promptissimi exequantur judicia Dei, ideoque dicuntur tentus Dei super terram fundatus, i. e. firmissimè constitutus. Schindler.

3. Others conceive it to be the whole frame of the world, which compared with Gods Immensity, is but a little *Bundle* or fardel, yea an empty nothing, *Isa.* 40. 17.

2. As in a Bundle there are many things wrapt up together, so in this terrestrial Globe, there are variety of creatures, of different kinds and natures, all setting forth their creators praise.

Tam sublimi & magno opifici, totus orbis nil nisi fasciculus & res minutula. Mercer.

He calleth for the waters of the Sea, and poureth them out on the face of the Earth.

Here is a third thing wherein the All-mighty Power of God appears, and that is in the generating of rain. By the heat of the Sun he draws up vapours out of the Salt-Sea, into the middle Region of the Aire, where they condense into clouds, and then dissolves them into showers of fresh water for the use and service of man.

He calls for the waters of the Sea, either for Inundation, as (some conceive) to overflow a Land, *q. d.* 'tis the Lord, that by his command lets loose the waters of the Sea to destroy his enemies. But most genuinely it is applied to the generating of the Rain. He calls for the waters out of the Sea into the upper Region of the Air by the Sun beams, that he may powre them down again upon the face of the Earth. See the same expression before, *Amos* 5. 8.

'Tis true, the Rain is generated by Vapours that ascend out of the Earth, yet because the Sea doth concur with its Vapours

pours also, therefore the generation of the Rain is likewise ascribed to it; and herein also the All-mighty Power of God is seen, that can at a beck call for the Rain, and suddenly the clouds cover the face of the heavens over our heads; this shews the incomparable Power of God, that can in a trice make such a change.

Lastly, If you desire to know who 'tis that doth all these great and glorious things, I will tell you in a word, *'Tis the great Jehovah, that is his Name.* This is the most proper Name of God (as I have shewed before, *Amos 4. ult.*) and notes his eternal essence, who gives being to all things, and to you, O Ismaelites, amongst the rest, and therefore there is no hiding your selves from him, nor dallying with him who is All-mighty, and hath his Troops in Heaven, in Earth, and in the Sea against you.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *The Omnipotence and Majesty of God doth wonderfully appear in the Heavens, the Sea, the Rain, &c.*

As the Heavens, so all creatures do declare Gods glory, *Psal.* 19. 1. We should therefore study the book of the creatures, that we may learn to fear, serve, trust, love and admire the Lord for his greatness and goodness. *See before Amos 4. ult. See Mr. Patrick on Micah 6. 8. p. 12, 13, &c.*

We have but two books chiefly to study, The first is the *Book of Nature*, or the works of God, and this we have set forth, *Psal.* 19. 1. to 7. 2. The *Book of God*, the holy Scriptures, *Psal.* 19. 7. to 12. We should not lightly think of Gods wondrous works, but seriously consider them, *Psal.* 46. 8. for this end he hath given us our judgements, and an understanding faculty that we might be enabled to consider his works, and this is the great end why he made the world, and adorned it with such variety of creatures, *viz.* that by beholding them we might be quickned to praise the giver of them, *Prov.* 16. 4. God will destroy such as consider not his works, *Psal.* 28. 5. *Mundus est Dei patris ad genus humanum Epistola. Plato.*

Much of God may be seen in the creatures; His Wisdome, Power, Goodness and Bounty are all written (as it were) in Capital Letters, so that he who runs may read them, for the invisible things of God may be seen in them, *Rom.* 1. 20. As the Rivers lead us to the Sea, so these Rivers of Goodnesse *Mundus universus nihil aliud est, nisi Deus explicatus. V. Culverwell Spi. Opticks. p. 516.*

ness and excellency which the scattered sparks yield, must lead us to their Creator, in whom are all these Excellencies by way of eminency.

[See the *Spiritual improvement of the creatures*, in D. *Tho. Taylors* the end of his Treatise of *Repent.* *Church his Miscellan.* p. 161, &c. *Caryl* on *Job* 14. 8. *Polany Syntagmat.* 5. *dep.* 3, 5, 7. *Woodward's Child's Parent*, chap. 7. p. 90. Mr. *Martin* his *Spiritual use of Orchards and Gardens*, 2 Part.]

2 Obs. *All creatures are Gods Troops.*

If he do but call for Fire, Water, Hail, Frost, Snow, &c. they promptly obey the word of his Command, *Psal.* 147. 15, 16, 17, 18. *Isa.* 40. 26. and 48. 13. *Ezek.* 5. *Hag.* 2. 11.

3 Obs. *All the world compared with God, is but a bundle.*

Yea it is not *fasvis*, but *fascículus*, a very little bundle. This the Prophet *Isaiah*, ch. 40. 12, 15, 16, 17. sets forth in most lively, Rhetorical colours, he speaks so fully to this point, that I shall not inlarge upon it. He proves Gods Omnipotency by his Works, he names but three, vers. 12.

viz. { The *Sea*, The *Heavens*, The *Earth*.

1 For the *Sea*, it is to the Lord but as an handful of water is to us, and therefore he is said to measure or weigh the waters of the Sea in his fist, or in the hollow of his hand.

2 For the *Heavens*, they are but a *span* with him, look how easily we span a thing which we would measure, with far more ease doth the Lord mete out the height and latitude of the Heavens. He meets on the Heavens with a span, or takes the measure of them with a span.

3 As for the *Earth*, he makes nothing of it. *He comprehends it, dust in measure*, in a Tierce or Triental, that is, in some small Vessel, holding some proportion with the fist and the span. He doth this great work with three fingers as it were; he puts not his whole hand to it, but as we weigh some small matter with three fingers, so doth he do this great work with great ease.

He weighs the Mountains in scales, and the Hills in a balance. The greatest Mountains are no more to him than an ordinary weight is to one of us. All this bespeaks Gods Omnipotency,

Triental, est tertia pars mensuræ duodecim cyathorum. Nos minutissimum intelligimus, quod tribus digitis possit comprehendi. Scultetus.

sipotency that can form and proportion out such vast creatures with so much facility and ease, as if he were but spanning, measuring, weighing of them.

Yet he hath not done, *vers.* 15. he goes on to set forth the transcendent Glory and Majesty of God. *Behold the Nations are but as the drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the ballance.* All Nations, all *Asia*, *Affrica*, *Europe*, and *America*, compared with the Almighty, are meet nothing, they are but as a drop that falls from a full bucket, or as a small drop that tarrieth behinde in the bucket when the water is powred out, which doth not diminish the measure; or *like the small dust of the ballance*, which remains in the ballance when powder or beaten spice hath been weighed in it, which is easily blown away with a little puff of wind, or such small dust as hangs on the scales, without altering the weight.

Yet more, *He taketh up the Isles as a very little thing.* They are to him but as so many atomes or motes which flye up and down in the Sun, or as a little thin beaten powder (as the word signifies) which is blown away with a blast. Islanders are apt to be secure and insolent, because they have the Sea to surround and secure them, but with God they are as a very little thing, which is easily overthrown.

Vers. 16. *Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering, q. d.* so infinitely great is God, that if all the trees in *Lebanon* were fallen for fire, and all the beasts there were slain for a burnt offering, yet would it hold no proportion with the Dignity and Majesty of the Lord.

Vers. 17. As if he could never magnifie God, and nullifie man sufficiently he tells us yet more, *That all Nations before him are nothing, less than nothing* and vanity. See what a heap of diminishing termes are here! Nations, all Nations compared with God, are *plorum nihil*, nothing, less than nothing, vanity, yea lighter than vanity, *Psal.* 62. 9. Before he had compared the Nations to a drop, and a little small dust, but now hee goes further, and tells us; that *all Nations &c.* compared with God, are *less than nothing.* Now if All Nations compared with God be this contemptible, what is one Nation, or one great man in a Nation, yea or all the great *Zaccamoins* of the world, compared with him? This

See more in Mr. *Cary* on Job 7. 16. p. 644, 645, 646.

may greatly comfort us when we lye oppressed by the great ones of the world, that though they be great, yet there is a greater than they; though they bee mighty, yet God is Almighty, and can with a word of his mouth confound them all.

4. *Rain is the gift of God.*

It is he that calls for the waters of the Sea, raiseth the vapours, condenseth them into clouds, and then showres them down upon us. But of this at large before, *Amos* 4.7.

5 If you take this calling for the waters of the Sea for an inundation and drowning of a Land, then observe, *That God can make our Land, to become a Sea*, he can bring a flood upon us as he did on the old world. But of this before, vers. 5. Obs. 4.

6 *God is Jehovah.*

He onely is the true and living God, who hath his being in, and of himself, and gives being to all creatures. But of this before, *Amos* 4. ult. Obs. 7.

See Mr. Trap on Hos. 5. 12.

Verse 7.

Are ye not as children of the Ethiopians to me, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord? Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt, *and the Philistines from* Caphtor, *and the Syrians from* Kir?

THe Prophet goes on to confirm the certainey of *Israels* destruction from the sinfulness of their condition; to this end, first, He labours to convince them of their Ingratitude and Apostasie; whereas the Lord had brought them in great mercy out of the land of *Egypt* where they lay buried (as it were) in a grave of misery, and made them his *Israel*, and peculiar people; yet they dis-ingenuously behaved themselves more like Ethiopians and Heathens, than his beloved *Israel*, and therefore as they had been like them in sinning, so now they should be like them in suffering.

In this Verse the Prophet by a Prolepsis prevents two Objections. 1 Whereas they boasted that they were Gods people in Covenant, and descended of holy Progenitors, and therefore God would not destroy them.

A. To this the Prophet answers, that in their ways and

and willing they were more like to prophane, Heathenish, Idolatrous Ethiopians, who were strangers from the Covenant of Grace, and aliens from the Commonwealth of *Israel*, than *Israelites*, or the seed of *Abraham* since they did not the works of *Abraham*, but of Infidels; and therefore since they had made themselves thus vile by their sins, God regarded them no more than the most contemptible Nations in the world, and was resolved to deal with them accordingly. The *Ethiopians* were a vile, accursed Nation, the symbole of servitude, *Gen. 9. 25. Cursed be* Cham, *a servant of servants*, i.e. a most vile slave let him be. Now from this *Cham* came *Canaan* and his brother *Chus*, who was the father of the *Ethiopians*; hence they are called *Chusim* (as in the Text) from *Cham* and *Chus*, Gen. 10. 6.

Scripturæ cum gentes remotas maximè & abjectas memorare velit, altiores propenit. Mercer.

The Interrogation is a strong Affirmation, *Are ye not as the children of the* Ethiopian *to me? q.d.* Ye are so, there is an emphasis in that word *mihi*, to me, *q.d.* though ye excell other Nations in many priviledges, and are honoured by men, yet when you come before me, what can you bring that is not mine? all your feathers and favours are but borrowed, and when I have taken mine own from you; wherein are you better to me than *Ethiopians*, or the most vile and contemptible Nation in the world? In respect of Creation, and by nature we are all alike, both Saints and *Scythians*, *Israelites*, and *Ethiopians*, we all come out of the same corrupt mass, it is only free-grace which makes the difference; and therefore the more God had done for *Israel*, the more humble and obedient they should have been. But since they forgat the God of their mercies, despised the counsel of his Prophets, and hardened themselves in their sins, the Lord tells them in plain termes, that now he esteemed them no more than the most base and barbarous Nations in the world; and this the Lord doth to abase them, and make them know themselves who were flust with such high conceits of themselves, and their priviledges, though they walked clean contrary to them; in which respect they were inferiour to Heathens, who never sinned against such light and love as they had done.

Obj. 2. A second Evasion was this, *The Lord hath chosen us for his own peculiar people, above all the Nations of the world, and hath delivered us from* Egypt, *and brought us into*

Canaan, and therefore (though we do go on in our sin, yet) we shall prosper, and no Judgement shall come upon us, as this precise Prophet Amos threatneth.

Ans. 1. It doth not follow, that because you have been delivered out of *Egypt*, that therefore you shall go unpunisht for your sin; but the contrary, since you have received such great blessings, therefore you must yeeld answerable obedience, remembring that they which have much, of them shall be much required; and if they offend, they shall be sooner, and more severely punished, *Amos* 3. 2. *Dung.* 12. 2. The Prophet tells them, that they had no reason to be puft up with this deliverance, for the Lord had granted the like external deliverances (though not alike in all circumstances to that of *Egypt*) to Heathenish and Idolatrous people, whom they lookt upon as Dogs and Swine. The Prophet instanceth in two Examples.

The first is that of the *Philistims*, whom the Lord brought from their slavery in *Caphtor*, Jer. 47. 4. The Philistims and Caphtorims are put amongst the posterity of *Mizraim*, the Son of *Cham*, *Gen.* 10. 6, 14. 1 *Chron.* 1. 11, 12. they expelled the *Avims* which dwelt in *Hazerim*, which belonged to the *Philistines*, and possessed their Country, *Deut.* 2. 23.

See the Large Annot. on Jer. 47. 4.

The second instance is that of the *Syrians*, whom the Lord brought from *Kir*, where they served other Nations. These are called *Aramitei*, from *Aram* the Son of *Shem*, from whom they descended, *Gen.* 10. 22. these were grosse Idolaters, and worshipped many Gods, *Judg.* 10. 6. and especially that noted Idol *Rimmon*, 2 King. 5. 18.

There was a double *Kir*, 1. There was *Kir*, a City of special note in the Land of *Moab*, Isa. 15. 1. 2. *Kir* another City situate in *Media*, of which we read, 2 *King.* 16. 9. *Isa.* 22. 6. *Amos* 1. 5. This was under the dominion of the *Assyrians*, and this is the *Kir* in the Text. Some make this *Kir* to be *Cyrene*, but there is no ground for that, for *Cyrene* was situate in *Lybia*, but *Kir* in *Media* under the *Assyrians*, which is far distant from *Lybia*. This deliverance of the *Syrians* from *Kir*, is mentioned only in this place; this they had from the Histories of those times which were then well known; as they had many other things not mentioned in the Scripture, as I have shewed elsewhere.

In my Commen. on 2 Tim. 3. 8. p. 152.

Some

Some give the sense thus, As the *Philistines* were ungrateful to God, who brought them out of *Caphtor*, and the *Syrians*, when he brought them out of *Kir*; so *Israel* hath been ungrateful to God, who brought them out of the Land of *Egypt*. But the genuine sense and summe of all is this. *There is no reason, O ye children of* Israel, *why I should respect you more than the very* Ethiopians *(that accursed and contemptible posterity of* Cham*) yea why should I make any difference between you and the uncircumcised* Philistines, *or Idolatrous* Syrians, *whom you have equalized, yea exceeded in sin? If you say that I brought you out of* Egypt, *did not I also bring the* Philistines *and* Syrians *out of* Caphtor *and* Kir? *you have therefore no cause to be puft up with these common favours.* It is true, I have out of mine own free love to you, exalted you above the Nations, but since by your sins you have abused my favours, and abased your selves, I do now no more value you than so many Blackmores and Heathens.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *To be born of pious Progenitors cannot preserve an impious people from ruine.*

It will not avail men to say with those Jews, We have *Abraham* to our Father, unless we do the works of *Abraham*, *John* 8. 39. *Rom.* 9. 7, 8. Let our Ancestors be never so gracious, unless we follow their gratious example, and walk in their steps, we are no better in Gods esteem, than *Ethiopians* and out-casts, yea the piety of predecessors is so far from justifying any in their sins, that it aggravates them, in that they had such good patterns set before them, and yet they would not follow them.

See Mr. *Gering* against Pride c. 9. ff 4. p. 78. *Vossius Rhet. lib.* 1. *sect.* 13. *p.* 50. *ad* 67. *ato.* 57.

A Noble Pedigree is little worth, where the line of well-doing continues not; and 'tis much more glory to begin the honour of ones house, than either to end it, or not encrease it. What did it profit *Cham* that he was the Son of *Noah*? or hurt *Abraham*, that his Father *Terah* worshipped Gods of Clay? or hurt *Timothy*, hat he was born a Gentile: Honesty (how mean soever the birth be) knows no disgrace. The Prince of *Satyrists* (though a Heathen) yet hath spent a whole Satyr to

Tota licet veteres exornent undique cera atria; nobilitas sola est atq; unica virtus. Juvenal. Satyr. 8.

Stemmata quid faciunt? quid prodest Pontice longo Sanguine censeri, pictosq; ostendere vultus majorum? Juvenal. Satyr. 8.

very good purpose, against those that boast of their Noble Pedigree, when themselves have nothing that is truly Noble in them.

3. *Priviledges abused increase wrath*, Mat. 11. 20, 21, 22, 23. *Rom.* 2. 9. 1 *Cor.* 10. 2, 3, 4, 5. *Heb.* 2. 1, 2, 3.

When men ungratefully abuse their mercies, and the God of their mercies, 'tis just with God to strip them of those mercies. But of this at large elsewhere.

In my Com. on Hos. 13. 15. Obs. 3.

3. *Sin debaseth a people*, and makes glorious Nations like to unglorious and contemptible Heathens.

Whilst *Israel* walked up to his priviledges, he was exalted, but when he offended in *Baal*, and fell to Idolatry, he died and lost his reputation with God and Man, both at home and abroad, *Hos.* 13. 1. *Ezek.* 16. 5.

4. *The changes in Nations, and transplanting of Kingdoms from one to another, are not casual, but providential.* There is the finger of God in them all. 'Tis he that destroyed the *Canaanites*, and brought in *Israel*. 'Tis he that cast out *Israel*, and brought in the *Assyrian*; he rooted up *Judah*, and brought in the *Chaldean*; and rooted up the *Chaldeans* by the *Medes* and *Persians*; and brought the *Philistines* and *Syrians* out of *Caphtor* and *Kir*. He puts down one, and sets up another in the Throne, and none may say unto him, What doest thou? *Deut.* 2. 21. & 4. 21.

5. *External favours and deliverances are no Arguments of Gods internal love and favour to a people.*

See Mr. Secker on Mat. 5. 47. p. 366, 367, &c.

Uncircumcised *Philistines*, and Idolatrous *Syrians* may be delivered from a *Caphtor* and a *Kir*, and yet these preservations may be to them but reservations to greater wrath. *Pharaoh* was delivered from many plagues, yet his heart being hardened, at last hee perisht in the Sea. *All things come alike to all*, and there is no judging of Gods favour by these external things, *Eccles.* 9. 1, 2. The Sun of prosperity shines as well on the barren Wilderness, as upon the fruitful Pastures.

See Dyke on the Heart. chap. 4. p. 51, &c. See six Observations more in Mr. Hutchinson on the place, I study brevity.

VERSE

Verse 8.

Behold the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful Kingdome, and I will destroy it from off the face of the Earth, saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord.

THe Prophet goes on in the confirmation of what he had denounced against *Israel*, by an Argument drawn from the Justice of God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity with the least approbation, and who will not acquit persons or Kingdomes that persevere in their wickedness.

Behold the eyes of the Lord are upon the sinful Kingdome to punish and destroy it.

In the words wee have 1. A note of Attention, *Behold*. 2. The matter to be attended, and that is, 1. A judgement threatned, *God will destroy Israel from the Superficies, or face of the earth*; that is, he will extinguish their memorial from amongst men, and root them out of the world, so that they shall never have more the face of a Nation upon Earth. The like expression we have, *Exod.* 32.10. *Deut.* 6. 15. Warnings could not mend them, now Judgements shall rid the world of them.

Mehhil penei, A facie vel à superficie terræ.

2. Here is the reason why the Lord will thus destroy them, and that is, because they are a sinful Kingdome, or (as the words are in the fountain) they are *a sinning Kingdome*, a Kingdome even compofed of sin, and drowned in iniquity. A Kingdome that sinned not through weakness, but wilfulness, whose sins were not infirmities, but enormities. They fell not by the violence of temptation, but 'twas their trade to be sinning, they were wholly given up to it; both Superiours and Inferiours had for many years been a race of Idolaters, persisting obstinately in their wicked wayes; no wooing nor warning, no mercy nor menaces could work upon them, they were incorrigible and incurable, and therefore the Lord now resolves to ease himself of them.

Quest. *But who is meant here by the sinful Kingdome?*

A. Some conceive that by Kingdome here is meant any sinful

sinful Kingdome indefinitely, but I conceive that *Amos* being sent more especially to prophesie against the Idolatry of the Kingdome of *Israel*, doth directly and primarily speak against the Idolatry of the Kingdome of *Israel*, for Idolatry is called *The sin*, by way of eminency (as I have shewed before on *Amos* 8. ult.) now *Israel* persevering as in other sins, so especially in this great sin of Idolatry, is here called (*Mamlachah Hachattaah*, *Hoc regnum peccans*) this sinful Kingdome; the article *Ha* is emphatical, and the Text saith not, Mine eyes are upon a sinful Kingdome indefinitly, but upon *This sinful Kingdome*, viz. of *Israel*; and then secondarily it includes the Kingdome of *Judah*, which had deeply corrupted it self, and not long after they also were carried Captives to *Babylon*.

3 Here is the certainty of the judgement, The *Eyes* of the Lord are intent upon them for this purpose (see Vers. 4. before) he hath set his face in anger against them to destroy them.

4 Here is a mitigation or qualification of the Threatning, *Yet he will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob*, but in the midst of judgement he will remember mercy; and having purged out the dross, and destroyed the prophane body of the people, and rebellious rout, he will preserve the penitent as a remnant for himself, according to his promise made of old to *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, Lev. 26. 40, 41, 42. Though the Lord beat Heathenish Nations to dust, and stock up the wicked root and branch; and though *Israel* deserved a total destruction, yet for his own Name sake, he will not deal so with his Church and chosen; he never utterly destroyes them, but leaves some remnant to praise him, and to shine like lights in the midst of a perverse people; and if he do bring them into Captivity, yet a remnant both of *Israel* and *Judah* shall return again, according to that precious promise; *Jer.* 30. 3. 10. *Lo the dayes come that I will bring again the Captivity of my people* Israel *and* Judah, *saith the Lord, and will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.* This was fulfilled when a remnant of *Israel* returned out of *Assyria*, and joyning themselves to *Judah*, came again into the holy Land after the seventy years Captivity.

It

It was usual with the Prophets to mollifie their Threatnings with the intermixture of some Promises, the better to incourage them to return, by giving them some glimpse of acceptance, and hope of mercy: for the Prophet having before uttered hard things against this people, he comes now in the close of all to end his Prophesie with promises of comfort to a remnant whom God would hide in the midst of their Captivity, till better times should come under the Gospel.

Some construe the words Ironically, and make them a confirmation of the punishment, *q.d.* I have punished Nations that never had the teaching which you have had, and do you think to go scot-free?

But this sense seems to be racked. It is better therefore to take the words as they simply import a promise of mitigation, moderation and favour to a remnant, because of the Covenant, and because of the Elect amongst them, and their Seed, who were to be the Seminary of the Church.

This is most agreeable to the contexture, and suits best with the next Verse, where the Prophet promiseth, that albeit God be resolved to sift the house of *Israel*, yet the least grain should not fall to the ground; and therefore the *Geneva* translation renders it well, *Nevertheless I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob.* Destroying, I will not destroy it, that is, I will not totally destroy the family and stock of *Israel*, but will preserve a remnant for my self, though they be captives in *Assyria* and *Chaldea*, yet as I have brought them in, so I will bring some of them out again, that they may praise me.

Ephes chy, non tamen, vel veruntamen non totali consumptione consumam domum Israelis Chald. Paraph.

5 Here is the confirmation both of the Commination, and the Consolation. *Dixit Dominus*, the Lord who cannot lye, hath said it, who both can, and will perform what ever he hath spoken.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *The eyes of the Lord are upon sinful Kingdomes to destroy them.*

The Kingdomes that will not submit to Christ, and serve him (be they never so many or mighty) must perish, *Isa.* 60. 12.

As his eye is upon the righteous to preserve them, so his eye is upon the wicked to destroy them (as I have shewed before on vers.4.) As he looks upon the righteous not with a bare look of intuition, but with a look of approbation in order to their assistance to do them good, and to exert his strength for them, so he looks upon the wicked with an eye of indignation for evil, and not for good, 1 *Pet.*3.12.

When men are given up to sin, and are become hardened and habituated in iniquity (as these were) then judgement is near, *Jer.*13.23,24. especially when Kingdomes are defiled with *Idolatry*, that wickedness with a witness, that sin with an accent, which truly and properly denominates a Kingdome to be, *The sinful Kingdome.* Where ever this sin goes before, destruction is at the heels of it. It is a soul-damning, and a land-destroying sin, *Judg.*5.8. *Psal.* 78.58. to 63. *Jer.*22.7,8,9. one such a sinner in grain, destroyes much good, *Eccles.*9.17. *The Idolater is a grand Traitor to the state he lives in.* He helps to bring Sword, Plague, Famine, and all curses upon a Land, *Ezek.*14.7,8,21. Gods eye is upon such to cut them off from the face of the earth.

2 *Gods Ministers must wisely intermix Judgement and Mercy.*

They must like the good Samaritan, have *Wine and Oyl*, *Wine* to search and cleanse mens wounds; and *Oyl* to supple and heal them. The sharpness of the Law must be allayed with the sweetness of the Gospel, *Luke* 10.34. *Amos* had often threatned, now he comforts. Obstinate sinners must be terrified, and pulled with violence out of Satans jaws; others that are humbled must be handled gently, *Jude* 23. We must frame our reproofs according to the necessities of our Auditors: All sores are not cured with one salve; that may be poyson to one, which is medicinal to another. The soul must be throughly purged from sin, before it can be cured, or expect any health. It is in this case as it is in sores, if any corruption be left unexpelled, the wound will wrankle, and may become mortal: For sin is like *Bishops-weed*, if you leave but little spangs unweeded, they will run over your garden, and suffer nothing that is good to grow near it. Ministers then had need to have the Tongue of the Learned, to know how to speak a word in season; for if we preach al mercy,

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we shall teach men to presume; if all Judgement, to despond and despair. We must therefore wisely sing both of Mercy and Judgement; hence the Prophets did usually give some glimpses of comfort, and grounds of hope to Gods people in their distresse. They had some *peradventure you may be hid and heard*, Joel 2. 14. *Jonah* 3. 9. *Zeph.* 2. 3. Take away hope, and you take away endeavours; impossibility of obtaining breaks the heart; and therefore 'tis that the Lord usually gives people some crumbs of comfort in their deepest distresse, that so they might be incouraged to come in unto him.

3. *In the midst of Judgement God usually spares a remnant*, Isa. 1. 9. & 37. 32. *Jer.* 5. 18. *Rom.* 9. 27. & 11. 5.

Though God make a full and final end of other Nations, yet he makes not a full end with his people, but corrects them in measure, and in mercy, *Jer.* 46. *ult.* Though he punish some, yet he destroys not all, but moderates publick calamities, for the Elects sake, *Mat.* 24. 22. In the Babylonish captivity the Lord preserved *Jeremy*, *Daniel*, and others. When all the Old World was drowned, yet a little remnant was spared, *viz. Noah*, and his family. God is ever mindful of his Covenant to his people, and in the midst of all confusions he is a Tower to his. As I have shewed elsewhere. In my Com. on Hos. 13. 14. Obs. 1.

Ver. 9.

For loe I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all Nations, like as Corn is sifted in a sieve; yet shall not the least grain fall upon the Earth.

THe Prophet having mentioned a mitigation of the punishment in the close of the precedent verse, he comes in this verse to confirm and illustrate this mitigation and moderation, by a Metaphor or Allusion taken from Husbandmen, who sift and winnow away the Chaff, but carefully preserve the Wheat.

For loe I will command the *Assyrians* and *Babylonians*, and they shall seize on *Israel* and *Judah*, and shall sift them; and if I command, who shall hinder it? how *Israel* was sifted, we have seen, how *Judah* was sifted up and down, you may see, *Lam.* 1. 3. & 5. 5, 6.

And *I will sift them as corn is sifted in a sieve*; which similitude implies three things. 1. That the men of *Israel* and *Judah* should be tossed and scattered among all Nations, as Corn is tossed to and fro in a sieve.

2. As the Corn and Wheat is preserved in the sieve, when the Chaff flies away, and falls to the ground; so in the midst of all these tossings and troubles, God would preserve his people that they should not perish eternally, though they might perish temporally, as *Josiah* did, and the righteous do, *Isa.* 57. 1. *Daniel* and other good men went here into captivity, as well as others, onely they had Gods eye upon them for good, which the others wanted.

The word Corn or Wheat is not in the Original, but is necessarily understood, and therefore all translations render it; *like as Corn or Wheat is sifted in a sieve.*

In cribratione duo sunt, 1. concussio, quâ omnia sursum deorsum vertuntur. 2. Segregatio & separatio. Camer. Prælect. de Eccles. mihi p. 230.

3. This tossing to and fro in the sieve, separates the Wheat from the Chaff. The Chaff falls thorow and is blown away, but the Wheat and little stones which are weighty abide in the sieve, and fall not to the ground. So these trials should blow wicked men out of their habitations, and out of the world to their own places. The corrupt body of the Jewish Nation should be scattered up and down, yet a remnant should be saved, *The least grain of Gods corn shall not fall to the ground.* Some render it the least *stone* shall not fall to the ground, and so give an Allegorical sense, thus, Gods Elect which are like stones for solidity and stability, and are called lively stones for their zeal and activity, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. shall not perish, but abide for ever. But our Translation is most genuine and agreeable to the sifting of corn in a sieve, and though the word *Tseror* have divers significations, sometimes it is rendred a *bundle*, Gen. 42. 35. or a bag, *Prov.* 7. 20. and by a Metonymy that which is bound in the bag, or bound in Bundles as corn is used to be; so it signifies a grain or little stone, as in the Text.

Viri boni quanquam communis mali sunt participes, ab exitio servabuntur. Grotius.

Lapillus pro grano proverbialiter pondus, vel potius palea. Catabrecis.

q. d. Though the wicked shall perish from the Earth, yet not any thing of any weight or worth; not one grain or corn which is solid and heavy like a stone, shall fall, nothing but the light, paltry, chaff shall be blown away. I will so order all your dispersions by my providence, that none of mine Elect shall perish eternally, nor yet the remainder of the faithful be utterly extinguished. Though

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the Corn may be beaten in the same floor with the chaff, yet it shall not perish with the chaff.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *The Church of God in this life is subject to many siftings.*

They must be sifted by *Assyrians*, sifted by *Babylonians*, sifted by false Brethren, sifted in Body, in Soul, in Name, Estate, every way. God hath many sieves and serses to sift us withall, that so we may become pure mancher for our Lord and Masters use.

God hath many purgatory fires to bring his people thorow. 1. The fire of his Word, *Jer.* 5. 14. & 23. 29. 2. The fire of afflictions and persecutions, *Zach.* 13. *ult.* 1 *Pet.* 4. 12. and thus every man must be tried by fire, 1 *Cor.* 3. 13. 3. If none of these fires will mend men, then comes the fire of the last Judgement, and consumes them, *Isa.* 30. 33.

All that look for salvation, must look for sifting; thorow many tribulations, we must come into Gods Kingdome, *Act.* 14. 22. The better any man is, the more trials he must look for. The more grace, the more sifting; as we see in *Abraham*, *Isaac*, *Job*, *David*, *Paul*, *Peter*, *Luke*, 22. 32. The Devil shoots his Arrows at the whitest marks. This spiritual Pyrate sets upon the laden Merchant. The Devil knows that the fall of one of these will more advantage his Kingdome, than the fall of a thousand others; and therefore he saies to his Agents, as the King of *Syria* said to his Captains, Fight neither with small nor great, but against these spiritual Kings. Men of eminent gifts and graces, especially when called to eminent places, as Magistrates, Ministers, Governours, &c. must look for eminent trials. These batter Satans Kingdome, and break his heads; and therefore let them be sure, he will bruise their heels.

2. As we must look for all manner of siftings, so from all manner of parties.

From { God, Satan, and the World.

3. *God* will try us before he will trust us; so he dealt by

Abraham, Gen. 22. 1. & Job 6. 4. & 16. 9. and the Israelites, *Deut.* 8. 2. Christ tried the Ruler, *Luke* 18. 22. and the woman of *Canaan*. God tempts us to try us, but Satan to destroy us. God betters us by tentations, he never draws us into sin by them, as Satan doth.

Non semper saeviunt Nerones, sed nunquam cessat Diabolus.

2. The *Devil* will sift you. He that tempted thy Saviour, will not spare thee. He that was so bold with the head, will not spare the heel. This is the Devils great battery, by which he labours to destroy Gods graces in us; though the Lord so orders it, that they improve them, *Job* 23. 10. Sometimes he keeps us from temptations, but he is alwaies with us in them, *Rev.* 3. 10. Yea when Satan is most busie in tempting, then is Christ most busie in praying for us, *Luk.* 22. 32.

Now Satan sets upon men many waies; sometimes by evil suggestions, perswasions, instigations, 1 *Chron.* 21. 1. 1 *Thes.* 3. 5. by blowing up the fire of corruption which lyes in our bosomes. The Devil is a great studier of men, he is a great Naturalist, he hath been trying conclusions on men almost six thousand years. He suits his Temptations according to mens *tempers*: if he have an *Esau* to deal with, he hath a mess of porrage for him; if a covetous *Achan*, he hath a wedge of gold for him, &c. The Devil cannot force the will, he may perswade, but he cannot compel. There is a threefold liberty of the will, 1 From sin; 2 From misery; 3 From Necessity. The two first we have lost, but from necessity and coaction the will is free; so free, that if it could be constrained, it were no will: and therefore in conversion the Lord doth not force the will, but sweetly inclines it. We should therefore blame our selves for our folly, *James* 1. 14. So did *David*, Psal. 51. 4. and when by Satans instigation he had numbred the people, yet he layes not the fault upon Satan, but upon himself, *I have done exceeding foolishly*. Pray with that good man, *Lord deliver me from that evil man my self.*

V. Dyke on Mat. 4. 1. p. 254

3 The *World* abounds with Temptations, we go upon snares, in our beds, at our boards, at all times, in all places, among all persons temptations are laid for us, in publick and private, above us, beneath us, round about wee are beset: Prosperity and pleasures on the one hand destroy thousands, and persecution and losses on the other hand. Had we not need then to be sober and watch? 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. and to watch

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and pray, *Math.* 26.41. shunning all occasions of sin: Not parling with temptations, diligent in our places, not trusting to our own strength. Sit down and cast what it will cost us if we be Christs Disciples. These things should not discourage, but quicken us to duty. We say of some weeds they are ill things, but they are signes of rich ground. So these siftings and tentations are irksome, but wholesome; the Torch burns the brighter for beating. The Vine is the better for bleeding; The Orchard for pruning; The Garden for weeding, and the Soul for sifting. It is a good sign of some great good doing, when we have many adversaries, and much opposition, 1 *Cor.* 16.9. Standing pools gather mud. There are many dregs in those *Moabs* that are at ease, and are not emptied from vessel to vessel, *Jer.* 48.11. I never knew any man kept long from corruption and putrefaction that was not (especially at his first setting out) salted and seasoned with many temptations and afflictions. Be not therefore offended at them; such Humiliations are the way to Exaltation, and such trials (if we sincerely, patiently and perseveringly improve them) our great glory. *Job* was more famous for his sufferings, than *Alexander* or *Cæsar* were for their Victories. His tentations brought more honour to him than all his riches. If *Job* had been onely the richest man in the East, in all probability we had never heard of him, but that which honoured him so much as to have a whole book written in his praise, was his Tentations and Victories, his Conflicts and his Conquests.

Cribration Dei non perditur, sed purgatur frumentum Dei, Zanchy.

These are *via ad Regnum*, the very path way to piety and glory, 2 *Cor.* 4.17. 1 *Pet.* 1.7. Did the stone but know when it is hewn and squared that it is to fit it for a Kings house and service; or did the timber but know when its knots are hewn off, and it seasoned with wind and weather, that it might become a Throne for some high and mighty Prince, would it not rejoyce and glory? And shall not we rejoyce in those Tentations and Afflictions which fit us for the service of the King of Kings?

Nisi tentatio, nec corona; nisi certamen, nec præmia, nisi hyems, nec æstas, Chrysost.

Quod ignis est auro, lima ferro, scalprum lapidi, runcina ligno, lixivium panno, ventilabrum tritico, sal carni, fornax pani, malleus saxa, hoc justo tentatio.

[See more about Tentation in that excellent Treatise of Mr.

Mr. *Bridge* upon Temptations, and upon *Luke* 22. 32. Dr. *Holdsworth* on *James* 1. 12. Mr. *Bolton Comfort of afflicted Conscience*, p. 564. 591. B. *Halls Balm of Gilead*, p. 101. D. *Taylor* on *Contentment*. *Dyke* on *Matth.* 4. 1. &c. *Sibelius* Tom. 1. p. 1. and p. 139. *Weemse* 1 Vol. 1 Part. p. 297. &c. Mr. *Capel* on *Tentat. per totum*. Mr. *Meads* Ser. on *Eph.* 5. 15. *Ward* on *Matth.* 4. 1, &c.]

2 *The captivity and banishment of a people comes from God.*

As all other evils of punishment, so this amongst the rest comes from him. It is he that commands *Assyrians* and *Babylonians* to lead us into Captivity. *Israel* and *Judah* had been long in Captivity to sin and Satan, and therefore the Lord sent them seven times into Captivity. This may befall Gods dear *Elijahs* and *Daniels*, and such of whom the world is not worthy, these may be driven from all, and be forced to wander in Desarts and Mountains, in Dens and Caves of the earth, *Heb.* 11. 37, 38. This must make us dumb and silent, since it is the Lord (who is a God of judgement, and knows what is better for us than we do for our selves, *Isa.* 30. 18.) that doth it. Wicked men cannot lead us into Captivity till God give the word of Command, *I will command the house of Israel to be sifted amongst all Nations.* This was in part fulfilled then; but since their crucifying of Christ, and rejecting the Lord of glory, all the twelve Tribes have been tossed and scattered over all the world; being hated and contemned of all Nations.

See Mr. *Greenhill* on Ezek. 11. 17. p. 389.

3 *The godly are Gods grain.*

They are called his Wheat, *Matth.* 3. 12, 13, 30. The wicked are Chaff, Cockle, Wilde-oats, Dross, *Psal.* 119. 119. Dregs, Scum, Filth, vain, light persons, that have no weight, nor worth, no savourinesse, nor solidity in them, and therefore they are called *Chaff*, Psal. 1. 4. which is blown away with every wind as good for nothing. But the godly are Gods *Wheat*, which is a substantial, precious grain, bringing great gain to the owner, strengthning and delighting the hearts of those that feed on it. Though it hang down the head, and make no great shew outwardly, yet within it is full of fine meal and flower, *Psal.* 81. *ult.* So the godly, though they make no great shew outwardly, yet they are all glori-

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ous within, their beauty is an internal beauty, which cannot be seen with bodily eyes; *Psal.* 45. 13. and though they be contemned by the prophane world, yet are their persons, Prayers, and performances very precious in Gods eyes.

See my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 3. p. 113.

2 *Wheat is solid*, weighty, stable, and abides in the floor, it is not tossed up and down with every wind as the Chaff is; so the godly are rooted, grounded, and stablisht in the faith, *Col.* 2. 7. they are not tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, as those *Paleares homines* of our times are, but they are an everlasting foundation, like stones that abide in the building, and cannnot be removed by any storms.

3 *Wheat* must be thresht, winnowed, and ground to meal, that it may be fit for food. The godly are Gods Wheat in this sense also, they must be thresht, sifted, and fanned with many tentations and afflictions, yea they must be ground even to dust by the teeth of the wild beasts of the world, that they may become pure Manchet (as the Martyr said) for their Masters service.

Dei frumentum sum, & bestiarum dentibus molor, ut panis purus sinceruſq; reperiar. Ignatius.

4 *Wheat* when it is ripe is cut down, and laid up safe in the barn and garner. The chaff and refuse wee cast out of doors, but our choyce grain we house; so when Gods people are fit for Heaven, God sends his Angels to gather his Wheat into his garner, into heaven and happiness, *Mat.* 13. 30.

4 *Not one grain of Gods pure precious corn shall perish.*

Chaff and Darnel; Tares and Hypocrites shall fall and perish, but not one corn of right grain shall perish eternally; though they may goe into captivity, and be afflicted outwardly as well as others, as *Jeremy*, *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, *Ezra*, *Nehemiah*, *Mordecai*, *Hester*, *Zerubbabel*, &c. and others went all into captivity: but the Lord was with them there, so that they kept their garments pure, and did shine like lights in the midst of an Idolatrous and perverse generation. They dye in peace, though (*Josiah*-like) they fall in battel, the Lord is a sanctuary to them in their captivity, *Ezek.* 11. 16, 17. and makes them to be pitied of those that lead them captive, *Psa.* 106. 46. and gives them favour as he did *Joseph* in the Prison, *Gen.* 39. 21. and *Jeremy* in *Babylon*, Jer. 39. 11, 12. so that sifted and tempted they may and must be, but totally and finally destroyed they can never be; for they have Gods Almighty power to keep them, *Joh.* 10. 28. they have Christ to

pray for them, his Spirit to seal them, the seed of God abiding in them, so that nothing can separate them from Christ, as I have proved at large elsewhere.

In my *Thesis de perseverantia Sanctorum.*

VERSE 10.

All the sinners of my people shall dye by the sword, which say, the evil shall not overtake nor prevent us.

THe Prophet having comforted Gods people against final perishing, returns again to his Comminations against the obstinate, lest they should presume and appropriate those Promises to themselves which belonged not to them; where we have,

1 A Judgement threatned, viz. *The Sword. They shall dye by the sword*; that is, some of them shall be actually slaine, the rest shall goe into captivity and banishment, which is a civil death, or which is worse, they shall dye *Gladio Spirituali*, (saith *Mercer*) by the sword of the Spirit, being blinded and rejected of God, so that they cannot repent. But this (though it be a truth) yet not from this text.

2 Here are the *Persons* upon whom this Judgement shall fall, and those are *Sinners*, all the sinners that are impenitent, Idolatrous, presumptuous sinners, especially *Idolaters*, those sinners with a witness, and such was the body and bulk of this people; *All* those be they high or low, superiours or inferiours, first or last they shall fall by the sword; since they will not beleeve Gods Word, they shall feel his Rod.

Obj. *But we are the Lords People by external profession, by Covenant, and by visible Adoption.*

A. Be it so, yet all the sinners of *my people* by profession, since they contemn the counsel of my Prophets, and persist in their loose conversation, shall perish in their sin.

3 Here is a further Character of them, or another brand set upon them, whereby they may be known, and that is, their *security, and incredulity*, in sleighting and contemning both God and his threatnings.

They say, the evil shall not overtake nor prevent us.

See how diametrically opposite they are to God. The Lord sayes, the evil of punishment shall come upon them. They say, the

the contrary; This evil and calamity shall not come upon us, at least *It shall not overtake us* (or anticipate) *and prevent* us; that is, either it shall not come, or it shall not come in our dayes, but when we are dead and gone; or if it doe come yet it shall not come upon us, it shall not come neer us (to surprize us. They thought themselves priviledged from such perils, and that they should never seize on them. *Non anticipabunt nos mala.*

But what saith the Lord to all this? why he cannot bear with such high and horrid contempt of him and his Word, and therefore he tells them plainly, that all those incorrigible and incurable sinners should fall by the sword, since they say, *This evil shall not overtake us*, therefore it shall overtake them, and destroy them.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Carnal security ends in misery.*

When once men begin to put the evil day farre from them, and sing a *Requiem* to their Souls, then comes sudden and swift destruction, *Isa.* 28. 15, 17, 18. *Jer.* 2. 35. & 5. 11, 12, 13. there we have their security; and Vers. 14, 15, 16, 17. the punishment follows. So *Mat.* 24. 48, 49. see their security; and vers. 50, 51. the punishment follows. When people are secure and incredulous, and will not hear, they shall be made to feel the truth of the Threatnings; as *Lots* Sons-in-law that would not beleeve, were burne to ashes, *Gen.* 19. 14. yet the world abounds with such; tell the Idolater, the Oppressor, the Fornicator, &c. of Judgements ready to seize upon them, and they are ready to mock, and say, Let the day of the Lord come that we may see it, *Isa.* 5. 19. *Jer.* 17. 15. so they shall to their sorrow, *Deut.* 29. 19, 20. *Amos* 5. 18. See more before on Amos 6. 1. 7.

2. *No priviledge can preserve an impenitent, idolatrous people from ruine.*

No, though they be *my people*, yet if my people will not walk in my wayes, but will rebel against me, even *the sinners of my people shall dye by the sword.* But of this oft before.

VERSE 11.

In that day I will raise up the Tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruines, and I will build it as in the dayes of old.

WEE are now come to the Third and last general part of this Chapter, and that is *consolatory*, containing many precious Promises concerning the Kingdom of Christ, and the restauration and inlargement of the Church in the dayes of the Messiah.

The Prophet before had been *Minatory*, terrifying them with many dreadful comminations of desolation and utter ruine, for their Apostasie and rebellion; but now (that his Sun might not set in a Cloud) hee concludes all with most sweet Evangelical consolations, for the refreshing of the remnant of the Elect under those sad Calamities which for many years they lay under. To this end he assures them, that though all at present were in confusion, and the house of *David* lay in the dust; yet the Lord who usually brings light out of darknes, and comfort out of discomfort, would in the conclusion restore the Kingdom unto *Israel*, and make up all their losses in a better kind with spiritual blessings.

And this was the frequent practice of the Prophets, to intermixe comforts with their Threatnings; the very first Judgment that was pronounced against fallen man, was allayed with a Promise presently annexed.

1. They used to awaken and humble their Hearers with terrours and threatnings, and then to raise them up again with consolations, especially with the promises of the Messiah, who was the salvation and consolation of *Israel*, yea the joy and desire of all Nations, *Hag.* 2. 8. in whom all the Promises were ratified and confirmed. 2 *Cor.* 1. 20.

Both *Israel* and *Judah* were falling into a very forlorn scattered, sad condition; the Prophet therefore to keep the godly amongst them from sinking into utter despair, comforts them with this, that in the midst of judgement God would remember mercy, being ever mindful of his Covenant, and though

though he punisht them for their transgressions, yet in due time he would send the Messiah with healing under his wings mongst them.

Some goe about to confine this glorious Prophesie to *Hezekiahs* time, when *Senacherib* and his Host was slain.

Others refer it to the times when *Judah* returned out of their Babylonish Captivity, in the reign of *Cyrus* King of *Persia*, when they repaired the ruines of *Jerusalem*. But the text is clear against this, for those were but poor, sleight, slender restaurations comparatively with this. For 1. but a remnant came out of the *Babylonish* Captivity, and those poor and low, and farre fewer of *Israel* returned out of *Assyria*. But the restauration here spoken of is most ample and glorious, as appears by those high and Hyperbolical expressions of *possessing all Nations, and the Mountains dropping wine, and the Hills running with Milk and Honey, and all Israel returning out of Captivity*.

It is therefore confest by all (even by some of the *Jewes* themselves) that these Promises have relation to Christ, and should be fulfilled in Gospel-times, according to that Apostolical allegation, and interpretation of this very Text by Saint *James* in the Synod at *Jerusalem*, Acts 15. 16, 17. *After this I will return, and build again the Tabernacle of David which is fallen down*; that is, the Church of God, in which Christ the Son of *David* should dwell and reign, it should be repaired and restored by the Messiah, and *I will build again the ruines thereof*, *viz.* by planting in it the beleeving *Jewes*, and bringing in the *Gentiles* as living stones, in the stead of the unbeleeving Jewes, *That the residue of men may seek the Lord*; that is, not only the *Jewes*, but all other Nations. The Apostle *James* following the Septuagint speaketh the same sense, though not the very same words. The Prophet saith the *Gentiles* shall be called, and he instanceth in the residue of *Edom*; but *James* here speaks more generally, and saith, all the *Gentiles* (which includes *Edom*) shall seek after the Lord.

See Schoolf. Guard, Rule 20. and Glassius Philolog. Tract. 2. cap. 7. p. 14 72.

In these five last Verses of this Chapter, we have a notable Prophesie of glorious things to come, and a cluster of precious Promises, no lesse than five.

For the reconciling the Prophet and the Apostle, see Mr. Hutchinson on Amos 9. 11.

1. Here is a Promise of the restauration of *David's* King-dome.

2 Of the calling of the *Gentiles*.

3 Of the abundance of Spiritual gifts which should be in Christs Kingdom, typified by the abundance of Corn and Wine.

4 Of the gathering of the Captives from banishment, into the Kingdom of Christ.

5 Of protection from their enemies, and perpetual habitation in their own Land.

Verse 11.

In that day will I raise up the Tabernacle of David *that is fallen, &c.*

THis general Promise is pregnant, and contains many particular branches within it.

Hoc omne Metaphoricè de regno Christi & Ecclesia è gentibus collectâ, intelligendum esse, testatur Jacobus, Act. 15. 16. *Glassius in Philolog.*

1 The Lord promiseth, that he will build up the Tabernacle of *David*, which is fallen.

2 He will close up the breaches thereof.

3 He will raise up his ruines.

4 He will build it as in the dayes of old.

5 Here is the *Time* when all these glorious things shall be accomplished, and that is, *In illo die*, *In that day*, viz. in that glorious day of the Gospel, when Christ the Son of righteousness should come into the world. In that day of Salvation, in that day of Light and Grace, when the substance should come, and the shadowes be gone; in those glorious Gospel-times should this glorious restauration and reparation of the house of *David* come by Christ. Or, in that day (say some) of *Israels* deep distresse and sad Captivity, will I arise, and raise them out of the dust.

That Christ should come in the flesh the Prophets had assured them, but of the punctual day, and year when he should come, they were uncertain, and therefore the Prophets made diligent search as farre as they might with sobriety into this Mystery, 1 *Pet.* 1. 11. this made them speak so modestly and generally, *In that day*, or in that time (for it is an usual Hebraism to put a day indefinitly for time, as *Hos.* 2. 21. *Joel* 3. 1.) which was foretold by the Prophets, *Gen.* 49. 10. *Isa.* 11. 1. *Dan.* 9. 24. and appointed by God when the fulnesse

nesse of time should come, Gal. 4. 4. then would *the Lord raise up the Tabernacle of David which was fallen, q. d.* In the dayes of the Messiah I will restore the Kingdom of *David*, and make that which was before a temporal and mutable Kingdome, to become a Spiritual and eternal Kingdom; and let this Rule be remembred once for all, *That these promises of temporal blessings must be understood Spiritually*; they must not be taken literally for the setting up of any earthly, external, pompous Kingdome in the Posterity of *David*, such a one as the *Jewes* look for, *Acts* 1. 6. and the *Millenarians* fancy to themselves, who take this Text in the Letter for building of fine Houses, and plenty of Corn and Wine, and delighting themselves with the Quintessence of the Creature; whereas it is usual with the Prophets in the Old Testament, to shadow forth Spiritual blessings by Temporal things; and this the Lord did the better to work upon the *Jewes*, who were a carnal, rude, rugged people, and not so easily wrought upon by Spiritual blessings, as by Temporal and visible ones; so that as the Legal threatnings were usually of Temporal Judgements (though they comprehended Spiritual ones also) *Deut.* 28. 16, 17, 18, &c. so the Promises under the Law were usually of Temporal blessings, though they included Spiritual ones also. But the Gospel proclaims Spiritual mercies, which are more noble and divine: for though peace and plenty are the Concomitants of the Gospel, yet these are poor uncertaine things, compared with Covenant-Mercies, which are called *sure Mercies*, Isa. 55. 3. Besides, Christs Kingdome is not of this world, his Kingdome is not meat and drink, *Rom.* 14. 17. but it is a Spiritual kingdome, and so must be taken here. This Kingdome Christ will restore when he shall gather his Church out of *Jewes* and *Gentiles*, in which Church there shall bee greater glory, than ever *David* or *Solomon* had, though in respect of outward splendor it be lesse, yet in respect of inward glory, it shall excel, *Hag.* 2. 9.

Promissio liberationis spiritualis constat Allegoriâ perpetuâ, quâ liberatio illa significatur per beneficia corporalia. Piscator.

Let us take the Text in the Letter, and see what absurdities will follow.

1 If you take this *building of the Tabernacle of* David, for a restoring of the Kingdome of *Israel* to its former pomp and power, and for the subduing of *Edom*, and other Nations by the Sword, and that they should never be rooted out of their

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owne Land, &c. See how all these things are contradicted. For,

1 When they returned out of *Babylonish* Captivity, they had indeed a Kingdome, but it was a poor, torn, contemptible one.

2 They were so farre from reigning over *Edom*, and the other Nations, that they were Tributary a long time to the *Medes* and *Persians*, to the *Egyptians* and *Syrians*, and at last were brought under the *Roman* yoke, *Herod* the *Ascalonite* tyrannizing over them, even when Christ was born; and at last for rejecting Christ, and Crucifying the Lord of Glory, their City and Temple was destroyed, and themselves dispersed like Vagabonds over the whole World, and so have continued this sixteen hundred years; so that literally this Text was never yet fulfilled, nor ever will be, whatever vaine men may fancy.

Loquitur de instauratione Spirituali, quâ electi Israelitæ per prædicationem Evangelii colligendi fuerunt in ovile Christi. Piscat.

But let us take the words in a Spiritual sense, in reference to Christ, who hath indeed repaired the ruines of the House of *David*, by sending his Apostles to preach the Gospel thorow the world, and to gather *Jewes* and *Gentiles* into the unity of his Church, and so erecting to himself an everlasting Kingdome, according to that of the Angel *Gabriel*, Luke 1. 32,33. *He shall be great, and he shall be called the Son of the most high, and he shall sit upon the throne of his father* David, *and he shall reign over the house of* Jacob *for ever*. These words are an excellent Comment upon the text, *The Lord shall give him the throne of his father David*; that is, Christ shall have a Spiritual Kingdome over his Church, whereof *Davids* worldly Kingdome was a Type; and he shall be a Spiritual King over the spiritual house of *Jacob* for ever. Thus you see it is a Spiritual raising up of the decayed Tabernacle of *Jacob*, and not any Temporal one that is here spoken of; and this Spiritual sense St. *James* confirms in the fore-mentioned place, *Acts* 15. 7, 13. to 17. where he proves the conversion of the *Gentiles* by the preaching of the Gospel from this very text in *Amos*; and this will better appear when we come to ver. 12. Now whether shall we beleeve Saint *James*, who saith that this text in *Amos* relates to Christ, and to the conversion and vocation of the *Gentiles*, unto the faith of Christ; or else the *Jewes* and *Millenarians*, who dream (as Dr. *Homes* doth) of a Saviour that shall reign in a Corporal, visible manner

See him confuted in the end of the Book.

ner here on earth, in external glory and felicity with the Saints a thousand years.

I will raise up the Tabernacle of David *which is fallen.*

By the Tabernacle of *David* is meant the House or Kingdom of *David*, which was a Type of the Church, which is Christs spiritual kingdom. It is here called a Tent, or Tabernacle, because of that mean and low condition which *Davids* family was now in; it was not now a Palace, but a poor flitting Tent, or *Tabernacle*, and that a *fallen* one too, full of ruptures and ruines; which intimates the sad desolation which had been made in *Davids* family. His Kingdom which was sometimes potent and flourishing, now was become like a poor ruinous Cottage, for all was out of order both in Church and State when Christ came.

Tabernaculum David regnum Messiæ & ecclesiæ denotat, quo utut humile est pii protegunturi. Glassius. Succa, tegumentum, Tabernaculum, tentorium, à Sacach, Velavit, operuit, texit.

1 The ten Tribes fell off from the house of *David* to *Jeroboam*, and from the true Worship of God to worship Calves.

2 The *Syrians* and the *Philistines* made inrodes upon them.

3 The *Assyrians* made havock of *Israel*, and carried the ten Tribes into Captivity; and the *Babylonians* fell upon *Judah*, and carried them Captive into *Babylon*, and the *Romans* fell upon them again after they came out of *Babylon*, and scattered them over the whole world; *Israel* never returned againe out of the *Assyrian* Captivity, only some few gleanings joyned themselves to *Judah* when they returned out of *Babylon* and came to *Jerusalem*; and though *Judah* did return after the seventy years were expired, yet Tyrants did so tear and shatter them (as appears by the Books of the *Maccabees*) that there was no splendor, no glory, nor scarce the face of a Kingdom amongst them, *Amos* 5. 2. at last came *Herod* the Tyrant, who rooted up *Davids* stock, and settled the Crown upon his owne head. Besides, when Christ came, he found the *Church* pestered with false Prophets, swarming with Scribes and Pharisees, and such as taught for Doctrines the Precepts of men. Thus what with the cruelty of Tyrants on the one hand, and the corruptions of false teachers on the other hand; the Tabernacle of *David* was sadly fallen.

And thus the house of *David* lay in its ruines (being shrunk

from *David* the King, to *Joseph* the Carpenter) till Christ the Son of *David* came, who repaired the breaches, and fulfilled the Prophesies. Then *in that day*, and *at that time* when all seemed to be gone, and all Human help failed, the Lord who loves to be seen in the Mount, sent the Messiah to raise up this Tabernacle of *David* which was fallen, and make it more illustrious than ever: yet not in Temporals, but which is more glorious and divine, in Spirituals; inlarging the Churches dominion over all Nations, *Matth.* 28. 19. and changing that earthly Kingdom of *David*, into a Spiritual and everlasting Kingdom, according to that promise; 2 *Sam.* 7. 16.

Q. *But why is this restauration of all by Christ called, the raising up of the Tabernacle of* David?

A. For two reasons; 1. Because the Kingdom of *David* was Typical, as *David* himself was a Type of Christ, so his Temporal Kingdom typified and prefigured Christs Spiritual Kingdom. 2. Christ was the Son of *David* according to the flesh, now the Kingdom was promised to *David* and his Seed for ever, *Psal.* 72. 17. hence Christ is so oft called, *David*, *Jer.* 30. 9. *Ezek.* 34. 23. & 37. 14. *Hos.* 3. 5.

And I will close up the Breaches thereof.

Gadar, septi, so Job 19. 8. Eam. 3. 7.

I will make up the gaps of the Tabernacle of *David*, or *hedge* and wall up the breaches of it, by causing the Gospel to be preached over all the World, which will quickly close up all the ruptures, and make up all the ruines which Sin and Satan hath made; and chase away all those Traditions of men which false Prophets had brought into the Church of God. This began to bee accomplishe when Christ began to preach, and his Apostles after him, as when *Paul* and *Barnabas* preaching to the *Gentiles* converted them, *Acts* 15. 7, &c. and it is daily accomplishing by the inlargement of the Church, but a more full accomplishment hereof will be when the *Jewes* and *Gentiles* shall be called, and united together under Christ their Head.

And I will raise up his ruines.

All its Batteries and Breakings, all its Rubbish and Ruines shall be repaired by Christ still. Wee see (as hath been shewed before) how low the house of *David* was sunk;

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it was like a poor Tent or Cottage, ruinous and full of breaches, and to a carnal eye irrecoverable and past hope.

And I will build it as in the dayes of old.

When it was in its most flourishing and prosperous condition, in those purer times of *David*, and the beginning of *Solomons* reign, when they were free from Superstition and Idolatry, serving the Lord in simplicity and singleness of heart.

The summe of all is this, *In that day of* Jacobs *deep distrest, I will raise up my Evangelical Church, which is the Tabernacle of the true and glorious Son of* David; *the Messiah of the World, even upon the ruines of the Jewish Church, which I will repair, and so make up the Spiritual breaches thereof; as that both* Jewes *and* Gentiles *shall make up one Church, which shall be made as Spiritually compleat as ever the Temple was materially of old.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Modesty and Sobriety becomes us, especially when we treat of divine Mysteries.*

We must not be wise above that which is written, nor curiously pry into the secrets of the Almighty; and therefore great is the folly of many in our times, that take upon them to tell the day, the year, and almost the hour (so divinely inspired are they, at least in their owne conceits) when *Babylon* shall fall, and the *Jewes* be called. One sayes, Antichrist shall fall One thousand six hundred thirty nine, another One thousand six hundred forty three, another One thousand six hundred and fifty, another One thousand six hundred fifty five; so *Clavis Apocalyptica*, many One thousand six hundred sixty six; only Sir *Henry Vane* wiser than all the rest (at least opinionatively) tells us flatly, that the walls of this *Jericho* shall fall flat before Jesus the true *Joshua*, hundred and forty years hence, viz. *In the year Two thousand, then comes the seventh part of time which shall be the true Sabbath.* Wisely done Sir *Henry*, to set so long a time that you may be dead and rotten before it come, when others that have set shorter times have lived to be laught at to their faces; the folly of these men hath been made known to all. It

Cum silet Scriptura, præstat ἐπέχειν, quàm temerè quicquam statuere.

were well if men would learn of the Prophet here to keep to generals. *In that day, and at that time*, and not point at particulars to their owne shame. Secret things belong to the Lord, there is enough revealed to exercise our parts and studies, though we should live *Methusalems* dayes.

2 *That the Church of God in this life may be brought to a very low condition.*

It may seem like a poor little Tent, or tattered Cottage, full of breaches and ruines, *Isa.* 1. 8. so that it is scarcely visible, and yet be a true Church, 1 *King.* 19, 20. as the Moon is the Moon and in Heaven still, though it lye hid for a time under the Clouds from our sight.

De visibili Eccles. consule Cameronem, in Mat. 18. 19. p. 244.

3 *After deep humiliation comes great consolation.*

Never any so deeply humbled as Christ, and never any more highly exalted, *Phil.* 2. 6. to 12. after this people had for many years been sifted, and tossed, and captivated, and the family of *David* brought to the dust, and no Human help appearing, but they lay like dry bones scattered up and down, yet now doth the Lord appear, and raise up the Tabernacle of *David* that was fallen, by sending the Messiah that little Branch, or Sprig, out of the stock or contemptible stump of *Jesse*, that was hewn down and cut off, *Isa.* 11. 1. when mans help fails, then God appears; our extremity is his opportunity, *Cum duplicantur lateres, venit Moses.* In the Mount will the Lord be seen. Christ came not here till all seemed to bee lost and laid on heaps, he still reserves his holy hand for a dead lift, and delights to help those that are forsaken of their hopes, *Deut.* 32. 36. *Psal.* 10. 14. & 22. 11. when this goodly Family was sunk so low as from *David* the King, to *Joseph* the Carpenter, so that there was neither King nor Prince left, then Christ appears and raiseth it up; when the Scepter was departed from *Judah*, then *Shilo* comes, *Gen.* 49. 10. when all was here in confusion both in Church and State, then comes the Messiah, that Horn of Salvation, and the glory of his people *Israel.*

See more in my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 9. p. 182. & p. 456.

4 *The Churches comforts are hid in Christ.*

It is he that makes up our breaches, raiseth us out of our ruines; and restores comfort to *Sion*, and to her Mourners. All our comforts, and all our fresh Springs are in him; our Election, Vocation, Justification, Sanctification, Salvation, come

come all from this Fountain, *Ephes.* 1. 3. to 15. He is Bread, to strengthen us, Wine to comfort us, Water to wash us; a *King* to defend us, a *Prophet* to teach us, a *Priest* to intercede for us. In a word, he is All in All unto us, as I have shewed elsewhere. In my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 15. p. 270.

5 *The Old Testament is the Word of God, and abides in New Testament times.*

James the Apostle when he would prove the calling of the *Gentiles* he goes to the Old Testament, the written Word of God, and from thence proves it; now had it not been Authentical, the Apostles allegation had been invalid. But of this at large elsewhere. In my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 15. p. 261, &c.

6 *Gospel priviledges are glorious priviledges.*

The Church was glorious of old in *Davids* time, when men went by troops to the House of God, and fled as the Clouds, and flockt as the Doves unto their windows. But the Spiritual glory of the Church in the dayes of the Gospel is farre more glorious than in the dayes of *Israel* of old. They had but the shadow, we have the substance; they saw Christ but darkly in Types and Figures, but we see him with open face. Hence the glory of the latter Temple is said to be greater than the glory of the former, *Hag.* 2. 9. But how can that be, since the glory of the first Temple was farre more excellent for building than the latter? insomuch that the ancient now wept to see how farre short it came of the former. I, but the glory of this latter House (though inferiour for structure) yet shall be greater than the glory of the former, because Christ the Messiah should personally appear there; and from thence should the Gospel of peace goe forth into all the world, which should work a true and blessed tranquillity in the hearts of all beleevers. Hence *John* the Baptist is preferred before the Old Testament Prophets, both in dignity and doctrine; and New Testament Ministers (who publish the whole Gospel) are preferred before him, *Mat.* 11. 11. Let us then bless the Lord for Gospel-priviledges, keeping them in purity and simplicity, for though in Old Testament-times God allowed them Musick in publick Services, with Altars, Holy Vestments, &c. yet Christ their substance being come, these shadowes are gone, and now Christ will demand, *Who required these things at*

See an excellent Ser. of Mr. *Pools*, on John 4. 24.

your Bonds? In vain is all such Will-worship, the Worship that Christ calls for now, is a worship in spirit, and in truth.

VIII. 12.

That they may possess the remnant of Edom, *and of all the Heathen, which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doth this.*

THe Prophet goes on to comfort the remnant of the faithful in *Israel* and *Judah* in their low condition, with the promises of better times under the Messiah; then should *David*'s Spiritual Kingdom be more glorious than ever, and the bounds of it more ample than in the dayes of old; for when the Messiah shall come, the *Gentiles* shall be called, and the very *Edomites* (which were deadly enemies to Gods wayes and people, *Amos* 1. 9, 11. *Obad.* 10, 11, 12.) shall submit their necks to Christs yoke, and be brought into the communion of Christs Church, by the operation of the Spirit in the preaching of the Gospel; yea and all the elect Heathen shall come in with them, according to that Promise, *Psal.* 2. 8. *Isa.* 19. *ult.*

Israelitæ possidebunt gentes, non externâ possessione (ut Judæi somniant) sed spiritualiter eas adducentes ad Dei cognitionem & verum cultum in Christo per Christum in unam cum Judæis Ecclesiam, ut ex utroq; populo una fiat Christi ecclesia. Mercer.

Formerly the Church was shut up within narrow bounds, and confined to the *Jewes* only; but now it shall spread it self over all Nations. The Prophet begins and names *Edom* first, because they were near Neighbours, and though Brethren to the *Jewes*, yet were they bitter enemies to them, rejoycing in their calamity, and laughing at their downfall, *Lam.* 4. 21. *Obad.* 22. Yet now these should be converted, and of foes become friends, and at unity with Gods people. These Lions should be turned into Lambs, and these Wolves into Sheep, and some remnants out of all Nations (though never so rude and barbarous) should bee brought unto Christs Sheep-fold.

What these *Edomites* were, see at large in the large Annotat. on *Amos* 1. 11.

God hath plagued *Edom* very sore, *Numb.* 24. 18. *Isa.* 63. 1. especially by the hands of *Nebuchadnezzar*, yet now he promiseth that a remnant of them shall be joyned with the *Jewes* in

in one Church whereof Christ is the Head, *Ibid.* 18, 19. and therefore the Apostle *James* tells the *Jewes*, that they ought not to wonder that the *Gentiles* had received the Holy Ghost as well as they, since it was fore-told by the Prophets, and amongst the rest by our Prophet here, *Acts* 15. 15, 16, 17.

2. Here is a further description of these Gospel-Converts, they are *such as upon whom my name is called*; that is, they are such as are called by my name, who are indeed my people. The like expression we have, *Gen.* 48. 16. *The Lord blesse the Lads, and let my name be called on them*; that is, let them be accounted my Progeny (saith *Jacob*) and be called my children. The like parallel expression we have, *Isa.* 4. 1. & 63. *ult.* *Let us be called by thy name*; that is, let us be thine. So the People of *Israel* are called, *The People which are called by Gods name*, *Deut.* 28. 10. 2 *Chron.* 7. 14. that is, the Church and People of God who professed his name, acknowledging that he was their God, and they his People. So those *Gentile*-Nations which were sometimes strangers from the Covenant, and aliens from the Common-wealth of *Israel*, and were not Gods People, shall now be called the People of the living God, they shall shew themselves unto Christ, and have his name put upon them, and shall be called Christians, *Acts* 11. 26.

Invocari nomen alicujus super alium, nihil aliud est quàm aliquem esse alterius imperio obsequentem & sub ditum, sicut super uxorem dicitur invocari mariti nomen. Sanctius.

Obj. *It is impossible that ever such desperate* Edomites, *and old enemies should ever be converted and brought in to Christ.*

A. With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible; *It is the Lord that doth it* (saith the text) and therefore doe not doubt of the performance, for he is both faithful and able who hath promised. Neither be offended that the *Gentiles* are called whom yee count unclean, for it is God that doth this, who doth all things well.

Q. *But when was this Promise ever fulfilled, say the Millenarian Jewes?*

A. It began to be fulfilled when the *Gentiles* were brought in with the remnant of the *Jewes*, who came in the roome of the unbeleeving *Jewes* in the Apostles times, so that the Promise is fulfilled *inchoativè* already.

2. It is daily fulfilling, and shall be more and more fulfilled even to the end of the world, especially when the *Jewes* shall be called, and the fulness of the *Gentiles* shall come in, and

and they shall all become one Church, and make up one Body, and one Sheep-fold under Christ their head.

The summe is this, *In Gospel-times both* Jewes *and* Gentiles *shall be so united, that they shall make up one Church, and the bounds thereof shall be extended over all the earth, even to the remotest Heathen, which shall then be called by my name, saith the Lord that doth this.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *The Election of God is free.*

He doth not chuse men for any fore-seen works or merits, or improvement of Free-will, but all is Mercy and Free-grace. What did the Lord see in those prophane, Idolatrous *Edomites*, to move him to call a remnant of them? nay, what did he not see in them why he should not reject them? and yet of his owne free-mercy, these cruel *Edomites*, and prophane *Gentiles* which were not his People, are here called his People. Away then with all those conceits of Merit, Free-will, Universal Election (which is a gross contradiction) for if all be chosen, then it is not an *Election*, but a *Collection* of all; for Election implies a chusing of some, and a passing by of others.

Let us then who are *Gentiles*, remember our baseness and loathe our selves, and let Free-grace in all the golden links of Election, Vocation, Justification, &c. be for ever magnified by us, that the Lord should passe by his owne People the *Jewes*, and make them a People of his Curse these sixteen hundred years, and should plant us poor *Canaanites*, and accursed *Gentiles* in their stead, is no lesse an act of Mercy than of wonder, *Psal.* 2. 8. *Isa.* 54. 23. & 60. 4, 5. *Acts* 2. 39. *Rom.* 9. 25, 26. *Ephes.* 3. 6.

See my Com. on 2 Tim. 4. 8. p. 408, 409.

Yet let us not be high-minded but fear, for if God spared not the natural branches, much lesse will he spare such wild branches as we are, if we walk in unbelief as they did, *Rom.* 11. 20, 21.

2 *Few are chosen.*

It is not all *Edom*, it is but a remnant according to the Election of Grace that shall be converted and saved. Hence the Scripture so oft calls the Elect a *Remnant*, multitudes perish, it

it is but a remnant, a little remnant that are saved, *Isa.* 1. 9. *Joel* 2. *ult. Rom.* 11. 5. *Straight is the Gate, and narrow is the way that leads unto life, and few there be that find it*, Mat. 7. 14. Christs flock is a little little flock, *Luke* 12. 32. How few were saved of the Old World, *Sodom, Jerusalem?*

The way to Heaven it is a difficult way, and calls for difficult things, and hard lessons which the world cannot endure to hear of, much less to practise.

1 It calls for Universal *Self-denial*, all Self-conceit, Self-ends, Self-interest, &c. must be renounced if we will bee Christs Disciples. Here most stick.

2 It calls for a saving, sanctifying, working, lively faith, and this is hard; Presumption is easie, but to beleeve requires the exceeding greatnesse of Gods Power to work it in us, *Ephes.* 1. 19. *Coloss.* 2. 12.

3 It calls for sincere Conversion, and that is an exceeding hard thing; it is no lesse than the change of Nature, it is the changing of a Lion into a Lambe, of a Wolf into a Sheep, of Fire into Water, &c.

4 There are many hard things to be *suffered* as well as to be done, many losses, crosses, tentations from the world, the Devil, and our owne corruption: all which laid together shew the difficulty of Salvation, and by consequence the paucity of such as shall be saved.

[See more at large on this Point, Mr. *Ant. Burgess* Spirit. Refining, 1 Part, Ser. 222. p. 63. and on 1 *Cor.* 3. 15. p. 192. *Shepheard* Sincere Convert, chap. 5. p. 92. to 117. Mr. *Watsons* Ser. on *Philip.* 2. 12. to 23. Mr. *Swinnock* on *Philip.* 1. 21. p. 132. to 139. Mr. *Rogers* on 1. *Pet.* 3. 19. p. 511. Mr. *Sheffield* against Hypocrisie, ch. 11. p. 91. &c.]

3 *Real and sound conversion is the peculiar and proper work of God.*

If a remnant of *Edom* be called and converted, *it is the Lord that doth it.* The way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, *Jer.* 10. 23. *It is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that sheweth mercy*, Rom. 9. 16. *Noah* may speak persuasively, but it is God only that can perswade *Japhet* to dwell in the Tents of *Shem.*

See Six Observations more in M. *Hutchinson, in locum.*

Verse 13.

Behold, the dayes come, saith the Lord, that the Plow-man shall overtake the Reaper, and the treader of Grapes him that soweth seed, and the Mountains shall drop sweet Wine, and all the Hills shall melt.

MAn by nature is a very froward, peevish, perverse Peece, especially when under the crosse, God hath much adoe to fasten any comfort on us. When *Israel* lay in deep distress in Ægyptian bondage, they hearkned not to *Moses* because of the anguish of their spirits, *Exod.* 6. 9. they were so oppreſt with sorrow that they could not mind what *Moses* said, nor beleeve any thing that was spoken concerning their deliverance, as deeming their deliverance desperate and past hope. So this People having laine long in Babylonish Captivity: and after that tired out with many troubles, the Lord here heaps up Promise upon Promise, to assure them of better times at hand. In this Verse we have a third Promise, where the Holy Ghost by the abundance of external and corporal blessings, doth shadow forth unto us the great plenty of *Spiritual gifts*, which should be poured out in Gospel-times; yet since Piety hath the promise of the blessings of this life as well as of that to come, and temporal blessings doe oft attend the Gospel, and God hath promised, that if we first seek his Kingdom, all other things shall be cast upon us, *Matth.* 6. 33. we may take the words in the largest sense, as a promise both of Temporal and Spiritual blessings, which should be poured out upon the Church in Gospel-times.

1. Spiritual blessings are promised absolutely and primarily, they being necessary *per se*; but Temporal blessings are promised as accessories only conditionally, with exception of the Curse, and so farre as they shall be good for us. Things necessary we are sure of, and if more may doe us good wee shall not want it.

Though both are promised here, yet *Spiritual* blessings are specially intended, as will appear by these reasons.

1. If we look into those Primitive times, when these Spiritual gifts here promised were poured out abundantly, the

Church

Church was low in Temporals, though rich in Spirituals, they were Persecuted and Plundered of all, *Heb.* 10. 34. besides, the Gospel calls for Self-denial, and a contempt of all these low injoyments.

2 In Old Testament times the Church was in its Childhood, and therefore *Moses* and the Prophets by such expressions did condescend to the capacity of the rude, and infirme Jewish people, which were as Children under the rudiments of the Law, and spake to them as we use to doe to our little children in their owne Language, when we make promises to them. Hence we read so frequently in the Old Testament of heavenly things shadowed forth unto us by Feasts, and other Temporal blessings, *Isa.* 25. 6. and Earthly peace typifying Spiritual peace, and plenty of Corn and Wine, plenty of Grace, as here in the text. By all those Temporal things the Lord would raise up our hearts to the contemplation of heavenly and eternal things.

In the words we have, 1. *A Blessing promised*, and that is, a glorious affluence and abundance of all things, set forth in Hyperbolical terms, and very lofty expressions. As,

1 The Plow-man shall overtake the Reaper.
2 The Treader of Grapes him that soweth the seed.
3 The Mountains should drop Wine.
4 If this be not enough, all the Hills shall melt, and dissolve into Milk, Honey, Oyl.

All figurative promises of Spiritual Graces and Blessings in Gospel-times.

2 Here is the *Time* when all this shall be effected, and that is in Gospel-times, set forth in those general terms, *The dayes shall come, viz.* when the Tabernacle of *David* shall be built, and the Kingdom of Christ be raised up.

3 Here is the confirmation of all this, *Dixit Dominus, The Lord hath said it.*

4 Here is an *Ecce*, to quicken our attention to these glorious Promises, *Behold the dayes come saith the Lord.*

So much for the Analysis, now for the explication of the terms.

The Plowman shall overtake the Reaper, q. d. The Harvest shall be so great and plentiful, that before you can house it,

it, the Plow-man will be at your heels to prepare the ground for another crop. Such plenty there should be, that they should scarce have time enough to gather it in, for before the Harvest was in, it should be time to Plow, and the Vintage should reach unto the seed time.

Non erit vulgaris & usitata copia, sed quæ fidem superat, imò etiam ordinem naturæ, quasi montes diffluerent. Calvin.

And the treader of Grapes him that soweth the seed: Or draweth forth the seed, *viz.* out of his Sack to sow, *q. d.* The Vintage shall be so plentiful that it shall last even till seed time; so that when you should be sowing, you shall be gathering of grapes; yea such plenty shall there be of all things, that when one kind of fruit is ripe, another shall follow, every one in his due course and order.

A Parallel place we have, *Levit.* 26. 5. to which the Prophet seems to allude, where we have the same Blessings promised almost in expresse terms, *Your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time, q. d.* you shall have such plentiful Harvests, that before you can have threshed out your Corn, the Vintage shall come; and such rich Vintages, that before they be ended, it shall bee time to sow your seed; so that you shall have one blessing in the neck of another, you shall alwayes be getting and gathering of fruit, there shall be no time wherein the earth shall not be yeelding you somewhat, either for necessity or delight.

And the Mountains shall drop sweet wine, or Must, which is newly trodden, and is called sweet, because new Wine is so. Mountains usually are hard, rockey, wild, barren places, but now they shall be so cultivated, and made so fruitful, that they shall even *run wine*. The Prophet seems to allude to *Judea*, which had Mountains beset with Vineyards, *q. d.* The Vines in the Mountains shall abound with Grapes. The like expression we have almost in *terminis*, Joel 3. 18. *and it shall come to passe in that day, that the Mountains shall drop down new Wine, and the Hills shall flow with milk. q. d.* In Gospel-times God shall give plenty of Spiritual nourishment unto his Church, so as every part thereof shall abound with the means of Salvation; for as in the text, so here, by figurative expressions is shadowed forth the blessed estate of the Church under the Kingdom of Christ; and it is usual in the Old Testament to set forth heavenly things by earthly Similitudes, as in the Book of the *Canticles*.

Gnafis, succus dulcis, i. e. *mustum*. Cant. 8. 2. Isa. 49. 26. Joel 1. 5. *Bacchus amat colles.*

And

And all the Hills shall melt; that is, they shall seeme to doe so, by reason of the abundant increase of Milk, Oyl, Honey, &c. as if they flowed with them. The Hills shall flow with Milk (saith *Joel*) that is, they shall so abound with Cattle, Bees, Vines, and Olives, that Milk, Honey, Wine, and Oyl, shall as it were flow from the Hills, and though they be high and hard, yet now they shall all dissolve into moysture, and be made fit for culture.

Some Allegorize thus; By *Mountains* they understand the Apostles and Apostolical men, whose Evangelical Doctrine was as Wine to comfort disconsolate souls. These plowed and sowed the world with the seed of heavenly Doctrin; and by *Hills* are meant the ordinary Preachers, who had Milk for Babes. Or, the *Mountains* are great men, and the *Hills* the inferiour sort; all these both high and low should in Gospel-times be inricht with gifts and graces. The multitudes of Converts should be so great, that they should keep the Lords Spiritual Husband-men in continual imployment, so that they should alwaies be Plowing, Sowing, Reaping, &c. alwayes Praying, Preaching, Planting, &c.

The summe of all is this, *That in Gospel-times there should be such abundance of blessings, that one should overtake another in a perpetual succession; as it is in a rich and fruitful soyl, where the Harvest is no sooner in, but the Plough is put into the ground for another crop; and the Vintage is no sooner done, but the seed is sowen for a new Harvest. Thus it shall be with the Church, where one blessing endeth, another shall begin, and even the driest and barrenest hearts shall yeeld excellent fruits of grace in great abundance.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Gospel-times are blessed times.*

It is the truly *Golden Age*, when all runs Milk, and Wine, and Honey, and all this without price and without money, *Isa.* 55. 1, 2. *Of Christs fulness we all receive grace for grace*, John 1. 16. The weak are now made strong, the barren fruitful, the Hills are levelled, the Vallies enricht, the Evangelical Plough makes all mellow and fruitful, and fit for Christ. See Mr. *Obad. Sedgwick* on Isa. 55. 1, 2.

We should therefore blesse the Lord, who hath cast our

Lots in this pleasant time of Spiritual riches, peace, joy, and abundant consolation. Happy we, if in this our day we know the things that concern our everlasting peace, before they be hid from our eyes. How great then is the folly of those that separate themselves, and forsake those fountains and mountains of Wine and living water, and goe to stinking Ponds and broken Cisterns of mens inventions, that can yeeld them no comfort or refreshing in troublous times.

O Fortunatos nimium, &c.

2 *Piety brings plenty.*

When men first seek Gods Kingdom (as in Gospel-times, it is prophesied they should doe, *Isa.* 2. 2, 3.) then Wine, and Milk, and Honey, and all other temporal blessings of peace and plenty shall be given in with the Gospel of Peace. The Gospel comes not empty handed, especially to an obedient people; as we see in *Constantines* dayes, and in Q. *Elizabeths* dayes, when the Gospel flourisht, the Nation flourisht with all temporal abundance. Piety hath the promise, and that vertually is every thing. If we be obedient, we shall eate the good of the Land, *Levit.* 26. 3, 5. *Isa.* 1. 19. *Hos.* 2. 20, 21, 22, 23.

See more in my *Beauty of Holiness*, ch. 7. obj. 1. and Mr. *Secker* his Non-such Professor, p. 269, &c.

Verse 14.

And I will bring againe the Captivity of my people of Israel, *and they shall build the waste Cities, and inhabite them, and they shall plant Vineyards, and drink the Wine thereof, they shall also make Gardens, and eate the fruit of them.*

THe Prophet having fore-told this People of their misery, how their Cities should be ransacke, their Land laid wast, the inhabitants captivated and slaine, comes now to comfort the remnant, multiplying words, and adding Promise to Promise, assuring them of comfort in the end: though the body of the People never returned out of the *Assyrian* Captivity, yet the elect remnant should be brought out of this misery into an estate of joy and felicity.

To the former Promises the Prophet here addes a fourth, which branchetb it selfe into four particulars.

1 They

1 They shall be delivered from Captivity and Banishment, *I will bring again the Captivity of my people.* There is a Paranomasy in the words which cannot be translated without loss; such elegancies are frequent, as I have shewed before. *Vesshabti eth-shebuth, & convertam captivitatem.*

This Promise was fulfilled when the Messias came, and delivered them from their Spiritual captivity to Sin and Satan, and brought them into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God.

And here the *Jewes* and their followers are out again, taking these Promises *Literally*, which are especially to be understood *Spiritually*, Mystically, and Metaphorically. For this returning here is an Evangelical returning to Christ, when the remnant of the Elect both of *Judah* and *Israel* should be converted, which though it be very sparingly now, yet in Apostolical times they had many Jewish Converts, we read of about three thousand of the House of *Israel* converted at one Sermon, *Acts* 2. 36, 37, 41. insomuch that St. *James* writes a whole Epistle to the dispersed *Jewes*, and *Peter* writes two.

2 They should have Peace, with sweet security and plenty of all things, which appears by the fruites and effects of it.

As 1. Plantation,

They should build Cities,
Plant Vine-yards,
Make Gardens.

2. They should have fruition of all these,

They should inhabit their Cities,
Drink the Wine of their Vine-yards,
And eat the fruit of their Gardens.

The like Promise we have, *Isa.* 65. 21, 22. *My Servants shall build Houses and inhabit them, and plant Vine-yards, and eat the fruit of them*; that is, they should peaceably enjoy the blessings of God, where still under Temporal blessings are shadowed forth Spiritual and eternal ones. As when God was angry with the *Jewes*, he used to terrifie them with legal Curses, as before, *Amos* 5. 11. *They should build houses and not dwell in them, plant Vine-yards, but not eate the fruit of them.* So on the contrary here he promiseth, that they should not labour in vaine, as they did before when they served Idols, and

and provoked him with their inventions. Speaking to the *Jewes*, he tells them still of Legal Blessings, which typified Evangelical and Spiritual mercies, as was usual with the Prophets for to doe, as Mr. *Burroughs* shewes at large on *Hos.* 1. 11. *Lect.* 7. *p.* 183, *&c.* his only fault there is, that he inclines too much to that fancy of the *Millenaries*, as Mr. *Baily* shewes, in his *Dissuasive from the Errours of the Times*, p. 224, &c.

And they shall build wast Cities; that is, they shall restore the pure Worship of God, and build up the Elect in their most holy faith.

Verè urbes desertas instaurant, qui cultum verum restituunt, & Ecclesias instaurant. Mercer in locum, ubi plura.

They shall plant Vine-yards and Gardens; that is, particular Churches, in which God delights to walk, and feed on the grapes of obedience which grow there. *And drink the Wine thereof*; that is, they shall have comfort in their labours, which they should see were not in vaine in the Lord. The Church is Gods Husbandry, and the Apostles with their Successors are Gods Husband-men and Vinitors, that must plant Churches and water them, and as much as in them lyes, propagate them all the world over, that Christs truth may bee known upon earth: and his saving health among all Nations. So that this verse is a continued Metaphor taken from such as returned out of Captivity into their owne Country, for such are wont to build Cities, plant Vine-yards, make Gardens, &c. now the rule must still be remembred, that by these are set forth Spiritual blessings.

Horti & Vineæ sunt Ecclesia Dei. Idem.

Omnia sunt spiritualiter accipienda. Idem.

How grosly then doth Dr. *Homes* abuse his Reader, that cites *Mercer* here for a Corporal reign.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 *When God is at peace with a People, then peace, plenty, prosperity internal, and external follow.*

When Gods face shines upon a People, then there is a new face set upon things; and those that frowned before, now smile on us, *Gen.* 32. 28. *Hos.* 2. 20, 21, 22, 23. when God is at peace with us, he makes all at peace with us, 2 *Chron.* 15. 15. & 17. 7. to 12. *Psal.* 81. 10, 13, 14. *Prov.* 16. 7. *Acts* 9. 31.

2 *Christ*

2. *Christ hath redeemed his Elect from the Tyranny of sin and Satan, and all the enemies of their salvation*, Luk. 1. 74. Col. 1. 13. and 2. 14. Heb. 2. 14, 15.

He that brought back the Captivity of his people here, hath lead Captivity Captive, and hath received gifts for men, even for the Rebellious, *Psal.* 68. 18.

See Dr. *Boltons* Bounds of Liberty, and Mr. *Burroughs* Saints Treasury, on John 8. 36. p. 87, 88, &c.

VERSE 15.

And I will plant them upon their Land, and they shall no more be pulled up, out of their Land, which I have given them, saith the Lord.

WEE are now come to the fifth and last Promise, which brancheth it self into two particulars. 1. A Promise of Plantation and Settlement. *I will Plant them in their own Land.* They shall have a settled and sure habitation in the Church Militant here, and in the Church Triumphant hereafter.

2 They shall have establishment, *They shall be no more pulled up out of their Land.* This cannot be understood literally for the Jews did not abide in their own Land for ever. 1. Before Christs time, when they returned out of *Babylon*, 'twas but a small number that returned to their own Land, and those abode not long there neither. 2. They were so far from ruling over all Nations, that they were tributary to them. 3. Their bounds were much straitned. 4. When the Jews shall be called, yet I think no sober man will say, they shall no more be pulled up out of their own Land, but shall abide there for ever, as the letter of the Text imports. I know that *for ever*, is oft in Scripture put for an age, or for a long time; but the Milenaries take it here in the letter, at least for their thousand years reign, but without any ground.

But take the words spiritually, as alluding to Christs Kingdome, in Gospel-times, and then all these Promises are abundantly fulfilled, though not *specifically*, in the same kind, yet *Valore*, in spirituals, which are of far greater value than if they had been Lords of the East and West *Indies*; besides the bounds of the Church are very much enlarged by the Gospel.

So that I shall (with the best Divines) take the words in a spiritual sense, for the perseverance of the Saints, such as are

true Members of Christs Church shall never fall away, none shall pull them from Christ, or separate them from his love. Christ will so settle his Church upon earth, that it shall never be rooted up by the violence of men, nor be prevailed against by the gates of Hell.

3. Here is the confirmation of all this, *saith the Lord thy God.* He is *Thy* God in Covenant, reconciled to thee in Christ, ready to give thee, all things needful for life and godliness. 'Tis he that hath promised, who cannot lye, nor deceive, and therefore thou mayest safely build upon his word.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *The Elect shall never totally and finally perish.*

Christ will build his Church, and if he be the builder, who shall hinder him? *Mat.* 16. 18. and 24. 24. The Elect are Trees well rooted, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified in them, *Isa.* 61. 3. Though they may fall foully, yet never finally; they were never real Saints that fall away totally and finally. Such as go out from us, were never truly of us. They that are truly ingrafted into Christ, no enemies visible or invisible shall ever prevail against them.

Ecclesia concuti potest, expugnari non potest.

'Tis true, the Potentates and Tyrants of the world, have been in all ages heaving at this Stone, but it hath crushed them all to peeces, *Zach.* 12. 3. Christ hath always had a Church, a little Flock, a Remnant to serve him, and ever will have in despight of all opposition. As I have shewed at large elsewhere.

In my *Thesis de perseverantiâ sanctorum.*

2. *God will faithfully perform what ever he hath promised to his people.*

As all the Threatnings shall certainly fall on the heads of the wicked; so all the Promises shall first or last be made good to the righteous. 'Tis God who cannot lye, that hath said it, and therefore he will certainly do it.

Promises

Homesius denuo enervatus.

DR. *Homes*, *Chiliastarum ille Achilles*, that Sword and Buckler, that great *Millenarian* Champion, which hath printed a whole Book in folio of ten shillings price (to my cost I speak it, for I never paid so dear for so much waste-paper, and a great nothing in a Jugling-box) in defence of that fancy. Amongst one and fifty Proofs taken out of the Old Testament for the confirmation of his Tenet, hee produceth this of *Amos*, 9. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. for one; you see how directly he comes in my way, otherwise I had not stirred one step, nor indeavoured in the least any confutation of the Doctors Folio, which doth sufficiently shew its own folly without a Confuter; 'Tis like a Puppet stuft with Bumbaste, in which there is neither life nor spirit. I have read of one that wrote a whole Sheet in the praise of a Louse; that indeed is an *Ens*, a living creature: But I never read nor heard of any that ever spent so many Sheets in Folio about this fancy and *Chimera Chimerissima* before. What *Luther* said of the Monks, is true of the Millenaries. *Sicut Monastica religio nihil videt in Scripturis nisi cucullas: Ita Millenarii nihil vident in Scripturis nisi Phantasias.* Corrupt heads, and corrupt hearts pick corrupt notions, and impure senses out of the pure word of God. Many in our daies, instead of solid food; do fill and feed themselves with golden dreams, and so resemble him that made the golden Legend, who is said to be a man *Plumbei oris, ferrei cordis, enei frontis.* 'Tis said of the Popish Priests, that they plead stoutly for Extream Unction, *Ut ipsi evadant Unctiores*, that they may the better lick their own fingers. I hope the Doctor had no aspiring thoughts, when he writ those High-flown-notions, but when I shall have shewed you how unlike Dr. *Homes* in 1651. was to Dr. *Homes* in 1641. we may well say there was somewhat of self at the bottome.

Tandem fit surculus arbor.

Some men have their guts in their heads, and their brains in their bellies. *Portentorum vidum gerunt in capite.* I may say of this Dr. as one saies of a finical empty Lawyer, he is *homo in causis agendis bene Vestitus.*

Quest. *But what doth Dr.* Homes *think of such men?*

Answ.

A. He tells you in the year 1641. *That for a man deliberately, and to please a Party, to wrest the sacred Word of God, is indirect blasphemy*; and St. *Austin* calls it *Heresie, Hereticus est, qui alicujus temporalis commodi causâ, & maximè gloriæ & principatûs, falsas opiniones aut gignit aut sequitur.* I doubt we have too many such *Augustinian* Hereticks still.

August. de utilit. credendi. c. 7

This of the Man, let us now to the Matter.

This text in *Amos* (saith Dr. *Homes*) will prove (for to that end he cites it) *that all the Saints departed shall rise and reigne with Christ a thousand years here upon earth, in a wonderful, visible, spiritual, glorious manner, drinking Wine, and enjoying the Quintessence of the Creatures, &c.* Now how this text should prove such a Tenet, I must confess my dimme eyes cannot discern. But the Doctor, who can see as farre into a Millstone as another man, will clear it up. But first, lest we should think the Doctor to be singular in this opinion, he tells you, that the great *Mercer*, and judicious *Calvin* on the place, concur with him (in the main at least) in this point; which how true (besides what I have already produced before in the Commentary) I come now to examine.

See my Tract against the Millen. p. 4. &c.

1 For *Mercer* on the place, of all Commentators, I find him most inclining, yea peremptory for a Spiritual sense in all these five Verses. How oft doth he cry, *Hæc non ad literam, non ad literam, sed Spiritualiter, spiritualiter, spiritualiter sunt accipeanda?* Where is now the Doctors corporal, pleasant, external reigning? By his abusing this learned Author we may guess at the rest, for no better doth he deal with *Calvin*. Hear how expressly he speaks against the Doctors opinion, *Quod hic dicitur de tritici et vini abundantia, debet exponi pro natura regni Christi; ergo quia spirituale est regnum Christi, sufficiat etiam nobis assuere spiritualibus bonis: Et Judæi, quos Dominus sibi residuos reservavit, contenti fuerunt illâ spirituali abundantiâ. Si quis objiciat Prophetam hic non Allegoricè loqui, responsio facilis est; nempe hunc morem passim receptum esse in Scripturâ, ut felicitas sub commodis præsentis vitæ, & terrenis benedictionibus quasi pingatur ante oculos nostros: præsertim hoc observare in Prophetis licet, quia stylum accommodabant ad captum rudis & infirmi populi.* What could be spoken more (from this text) against the Doctors opinion, and yet the Doctor still tells us, that *he mainly contends for a literal sense, and for a Corporal bringing back of the*

V. Calvin in Amos 9. ult.

See Dr. Homes for the Millen. p. 312. fol.

the ten Tribes into their own country. But a greater than Doctor *Homes* is of another judgement, it is the learned Doctor *Rivet*, in glossing on *Amos* 9. 13. thus he saith, *Harum promissionum minima pars ad temporalia referri debet, ut ex iis assurgamus ad spiritualia; & pleraq; etiam non impleri perfectè in hac vitâ teneamus, sed cœlestem beatitudinem respicere, quomodo, quando excellentius est quod promittitur regni Christi civibus præstandum, quàm unquam temporaliter fuit præstitum; necessarium est ut de bonis spiritualibus accipiatur per Christum donandis, &c. ubi plura.* *V. Rivet*, in Hos. 2. 21. p. 567.

But to put all out of controversie, St. *James* citing *Amos* 9. 11, 12, interprets them Spiritually, and proves the calling and conversion of the *Gentiles* in the Apostolical times from them (as I have shewed before) *Acts* 15. 7. to 17. now whether shall we beleeve the Apostle *James* that interprets these words Spiritually, or Doctor *Homes* who mainly contends for a literal sense?

2 *Dato non concesso*, giving but not granting what the Doctor saith, suppose all these promises were to be taken literally, for temporal blessings, yet how doth it follow hence that Christ shall reign with the Saints on earth in a visible manner a thousand years? Let any one read over all these five Verses, and put to any one of them singly, or to all conjunctly, *ergo* Christ shall reign with the Saints a thousand years here on earth; and see if he can forbear smiling at such gross *Non-sequiturs*, which agree like Harp and Harrow.

Lastly, the Doctor in the close of all challengeth all the Men, and Books in the World, to shew when ever these promises were yet fulfilled? *When* (saith this self-conceited Doctor) *were all the wast Cities re-built, the breaches made up, when was there ever yet all spiritual, and all outward prosperity in the Church? When did the Mountains ever run Wine, or the Hills ever melt into Oyl, and Milk, and Honey, and when were all these enjoyments perpetuated?*

Ans. If you take the Promises spiritually, St. *James* hath told us they were fulfilled in the Apostles dayes; if you take them literally they never were, nor ever will be fulfilled; who ever looks for a sinless, sorrowless, deathless condition, (as the Doctor dreams of) in this world, when the Mountains shall run Wine, &c. none but grosse Fanaticks will

fancy such fables. I am even tired with mentioning them.

Obj. *But if this text in* Amos *will not prove the point, yet the Doctor hath one prime place which will prove it* terminis terminantibus, *and that is* Revel. 20. 4, 5, 6.

Answ. Doctor *Homes* shall confute Doctor *Homes*, Doctor *Nathaniel Homes*, 1641. shall confute dreaming Dr. *Homes*, 1651. the greatest Antimillenarian could hardly say more against them than he did then, when the opinion was not in fashion. But he may say as a loose Bishop did sometimes,

Nunc aliud tempus, alii pro tempore mores.

He pleads for *Geneva* and *Scotland*, saying, *Omne bonum ab Aquilone.* Yet now himself is in this heavenly wide number.

But hear what he sayes (in his Ser. on 2 *Pet.* 3. 13. p. 4. to 7. preacht before the Parliament, 1641. where he strongly asserts the excellency of the Presbyterian Government, p. 29. 38, &c. I mention this only, lest he should face about again, but I think his *Rump* -- is broken, &c.) *Our Divines* (saith he) *commonly called Millenaries, would understand this text of* Peter, *of the Martyrs reigning a thousand years on earth, before they be taken up soul and body into heaven*; but these are as wide as earth from Heaven. Of innumerable particulars which might be alleadged, let us at this time be content with some touches on that leading place, *Revel.* 20. 4, &c. 1. The text tells us (saith he) that it is their *Souls* shall reign, and not their Bodies, and by a thousand years is meant an eternity of felicity and reigning in heaven. Then he cites *Parens* on *Rev.* 20. against them, and perswades his Reader to read that Learned man on that point. Then he takes off their objections, and at last tells us, that *Papias* the first Author of this opinion *was a credulous man, and apt to receive fables for verities*; I wish *D. H.* were not too like him. You see by this time what little credence is to be given to this Weather-cock, that can turn, and turn, but never crow.

Euseb. Hist. l. 3. cap. 35.

But what task I of D. *H.* when I find learned Sir *Henry Vane* (*in eadem hæresi*) in his vain peece of Learned Nonsense to favour this opinion, I may say of that Cloudy Book with better reason what one said of *Persius*, *Si non vis intelligi, debes negligi.* Truth loves not clouds and corners, it is error that is *lucifugus* and fears the light.

Cyprian. Præf. adverf. Judæos

I shall be brief, remembring that of *Cyprian*, *Brevitas controversiarum*

troversiarum legentibus plurimum prodest, dum non intellectum legentis, & seipsum liber longior spargit; sed subtilioro compendio (id quod legitur) tenax memoria custodit.

Sir *Henry Vane*, in his *Mystery of Godlinesse*, ch. 25. tells us, that *when this thousand years are come, Magistracy, and Visible Worship, and forms of Christian Religion, &c. shall be destroyed, &c.* Those places which point expressly at the Day of Judgment, he wracks and wrests to prove his thousand years reign, as *Acts* 3.19,20,21.& 17.31. 1 *Thes.*4.16.& 1 *Cor.*6.2,3.

Good news for Libertines.

Q. *But when doth Sir* Henry *say that this thousand years reign shall begin?*

A. So far as I can gather from him, this thousand years reign of Christ on earth shall begin in the seventh thousand year of the world, *viz.* about 440. years hence. Wisely done S. *H.* to set a longer time than most of this way doe, that so he may not be laught at for his vain calculation whilst he liveth.

But that I may not wrong him (for he hath wronged himself too much already) take his own words, *ch.*26.*p.*418,428. *The General assembly of the first born are to continue and abide for a thousand years in the exercise of this immortal, incorruptible, bodily life here in this world, keeping the true Sabbath of rest unto the Lord, in that seventh part of the time of the worlds duration. All worldly strength, wisdome, power, shall then as the walls of* Jericho, *fall flat before Jesus the true* Joshua, *and these true* Israelites, *as having been by them compassed about six dayes, and now on the seventh, a thousand years being with the Lord as one day,* 2 Pet.3.8 *making way for the end mentioned,* 1 Cor. 15. 24. so that now men may know when the Day of Judgement shal be, *viz.* about four hundred and forty years hence.

See all this folly confuted in my Tract against the *Millenaries.*

But how doth Sir *H.* prove all these high-flown Notions? why *ipse dixit*, he that never erred sayes it, witness our self at W.

It will be the wisdome of those in authority, speedily to suppress such real Fanatical opinions; else *Ha nugæ seria fient.* These trifles may become troubles.

If any shall take offence at my plainenes against these loose Principles, I shall answer with *Bernard*, *Malo in me murmur hominum quam in Deum, bonum est mihi, si Deus me utatur pro clypeo.*

FINIS.

A Table of the Principal things contained in this Commentary.

Pages

A.

AFflictions *come from God*, 517, 518, 551, *and lead to God* 371
Angels, *their Office* 517
Apathy *condemned* 327
Application *necessary* 108, 308
Assurance, *attainable* 208
Almes *how to be given*, 43. *Motives to it* 31, 32. *Cavils answered*, 37, *&c.*

B.

BEauty *is vanity* 499
Beggars, *lusty not to be releeved* 51, 52
Beleeve, *we are slow to it* 337
Bethel, *what it was* 21
Bribery *base* 12. & 190
Burial *decent a mercy* 344
Burnt-offerings, *what they were* 231

C.

Carmel, *what it was* 523
Carnal confidence *vain* 295
Carnal security *dangerous* 303, 304
Children *fare the worse for wicked Parents* 16, 17
Churches, *how holy* 25

Pages

Church Musick *a Novelty* 314
Church *must be dear to us*, 320
our love to it rewarded 327
Cities *ruined by Sin* 100, 299
Come, *every wicked man hath his come*, 13. *and good men should have their come* ibid.
Company *of the wicked to be shunned* 24
Conversion *the end of correction*, 65
Consideration, *how necessary* 298, 299
Covetous *men are carnal* 468, 469
Creature *is vanity*, 356. *How to improve it to Gods glory* 535
Curiosity *to be shunned* 563

D.

DArknes, *what it signifies*, 217, 324
Decrees *of God abide* 340
Despair, *the wicked doe so* 347
Drinking *put for feasting* 8
Duties *daily to be practised* 29

E.

ELection *free* 568
Englands *Mercies* 65
Epicurism *vile* 308

Pages

Evil, *flee it* 204, 205
Examples *of Saints abused* 327
Examples *of great men when wicked, do much hure* 10
Extremity, *Gods people oft brought to it* 373

F.

FAmine *a sad Judgement* 61, 62. *what Sins bring it*, 62. *famine of the Word most sad* 489
Feasting *when unlawful*, 322, 323
Family-duties *to be set up*, 30. *false Prophets, enemies to the true*, Chap. 7. 10. Obs. 1
Fear *proper to wicked men* 19
Few *are saved* 569
Flying *will not avail the wicked* 518, 521, 523 & 222, 223
Free-will, *we have lost*, 105, 153
Fruit, *lost by sin* 80

G.

GAtes, *how used* 179, 180
God *is Omnipotent* 225, 385, *fear him*, 125, 127. *a six-fold comfort in it*, 126, 127 *He is Omniscient*, 11, 12, 289 *He is just*, 384. *he is most High*, 135, 136. *most Holy*, 15. *Good* 204, *Patient*, 353, *Lord of Hosts*, 137, 337. *he is the saddest enemy*, 524, 525. *if he be against us, all is against us*, 148. *his special presence the glory of a place*, 205. *He is merciful* 100, 108
Gogal, *what it is* 22, 26
Gods Worship *permissum to wicked men* 464, 465
Godly *vilified*, 469. *they are Gods graine* 552
Good things *must be often pressed* 209
Good intentions *no warrant for evil actions* 27
Godly *not seditious, but peaceable, proved at large*, Chap. 7. Vers. 10. Obs. 4.

H.

HEardened *Sinners are incurable*, 65, 66, 100, 101
Heart *searcht by God* 127, 128, 130
Holy Ghost *is God* 120
Hope *upholds us* 211
Humiliation *goes before consolation* 564
Hypocrites *are Ceremonious*, 57 *their service no service*, 67 347

I.

Idolatry *brings Judgements*, 74. *it is a great Sin*, 502. *it is a flesh-pleasing sin*, 59. *it is very dangerous* 253, 254, 458
Jehovah, *what it notes* 136
Ingratitude, *vile* 295
Instruments, *God wants not to doo his work* 8
Ironies *lawful* 24
Mr. Jones *his bounty* 47
Judicial Astrology, *vile* 72, 73
Judgements *seldome goe alone*, 340. *they usually begin at Gods house*,

Pages

house, 524. we are slow to believe them, 15. God hath variety of them 74, 75, 78, 79, 302. they are gradual, ch. 7. v. 8

Judgements on others must make us fear 298, 299

The Judgement of God differs from mans judgement 503

Justice, God delights in it, 239 how it must be performed, 240 when perverted it is a crying sin, 353, 354

Ivory much used by the Jewes, 306, 307

Judge our selves we must 346

L.

LEven, how used 55

Legal Promises adumbrate Spiritual Blessings 559

Lesser Judgements contemned make way for greater 107

Life Spiritual its excellency, 158, & 468

Luxury breeds cruelty 323

M.

MAtters of moment must bee marked 350

Mercy to the poor our duty, 31, &c. at large

Mercies abused provoke wrath 26

Mercy and Judgement mixt 546

Mirth of the wicked turned to mourning 331

Ministery is searching, 133, & 322

Ministers must persevere in their

Pages

Ministery, 452. they must preach plainly, 253. they must be prudent 371

Mockers how vile 218, 219

Moloch, what it was 247, 248

Mountains melt when God is angry, 530. They are mercies to the world 118, 119

Musick abused, unlawful, 235. & 310

O.

OBedience, qualifications of it 58, 59

Oppressors rich men many times are such 12

Oppressors of others shall be oppreat themselves 15, 16

P.

Patience in calamities necessary, 200, 201, & 346

Perseverance necessary, 553, 578

Parity of sin brings parity of suffering 83

Persecution dangerous 328

Pestilence comes from God, 84. what sins bring it, 84, 85. a sad Judgement, 86. whether we may fly from it, 87, 88. Good men may dye of it 89

Piety brings plenty 574

Places debased by sin, 25. shun Idolatrous places 160

Pleasures carnal, costly 321

Plots, broken by God 128

Poverty, the causes of it to be shunned 53

Plaine Preachers disliked, 573

P Pages

Prayer *our daily practice*, 29. *it is powerful*, 109, 374. *when Argumentative*, 372. *persevere in it*, 377. *short prayer if fervent may prevaile much* 378

Praises *due to God*, 58. & 357

Preach *none may without a Call*, 8. *Preaching to be preferred before Miracles*, 97, 98. *it is the Souls food*, 487. *contempt of it brings a famine* 488

Priviledges *cannot keep off Judgments* 294, 337

Presence of God *the glory of a place* 205

Progenitors *though pious cannot avail an impious people* 541

Providence *governs all* 99, 100

Proverbial speeches *commendable* 353

Prudence *three-fold*, 192. *Pious men are prudent*, 196. *which appears in eight particulars*, 197, 198

Q.

Quakers, *how vile* 57, 58 131

Questions, *how useful*, 245

R.

Raine *falls by appointment*, 71. *want of it a Judgement* 70, 71

A Remnant *saved* 547

Relicks *of Saints vain* 345

Repentance *difficult*, 75. *its excellency* 113, 116

P Pages

Reproofes *belong to great men as well as others*, 5, 9, 10. *Reproof when hated aggravates sin* 181

Retaliation *used by God*, 16, 64, 65, 186, 360

Rhetorick *in Scripture*, 293

Righteousness *to bee practised*, 30

Ripe, *when a people are for ruine*. 16

Rulers *are the Head of a Land*, 515, 516

S.

Sacrifices *without obedience odious to God*. 227, 229, 230, 234

Security *brings misery*, 294, 555

Self-judging *necessary* 115

Seek God: *how that must be done*, 155, 156

A Sensual life *odious* 307

Sifted, *Gods Church is many ways*, 549

Silence, *when a point of prudence*, 198, 199

Seven, *how used* 187

Silver *avayls not in a day of trouble* 19

Singing *of Psalmes its excellency*, 316. *How to sing*, 317

Sins *of omission dangerous* 214

Sin *and punishment are inseparable*, 15. *It makes war between God and a people*, 379. *It robs us of our comforts*, 94. *It ruines places*, 100. *It is an evil thing*, 210. *Continuance in*

Pages

it dangerous [illegible] *hated*, 218. *What rise it gives men*, 439, 440, 545. *and ends in sorrow*, 472. *It is bitter*, 484. *and makes the earth to groan* 475

Smelling, *what it notes* 228

Superstition *to be avoyded* 29

Swearing, *when lawful*, 15. & 336

Sympathize *we must with Gods people*, 143, 314, 315, 371

T.

TEntations *useful* 552

Ten, *how used* 339

Our Times in *Gods hand*, 332. *What use to make of it*, 333.

Travelling, *take heed of it*, 160.

Thoughts *known to God*; 122, 127, 131. *Uses of it*, 132. *Comforts from it*, 134

Tythes *due* 23

V.

UNiversality *in sin brings universality in suffering* 356

Unmercifulness *a great sin*, 31, & 466

Unrighteous *dealing sinful* 468

Pages

W.

Wan *sent for sin*, 90. *See seventeen sins which bring it*, 92. *it is sad* 380

Wheat, *how the gody are like it*, 551

Warning, *God give* 108, 295

Will-worship *sinful*, 129, 256, 503

Willing *we must be in Gods Service* 58

Wicked *men are like beasts*, 10. *they are the pests of a place*, 19. *they grow worse and worse*, 26, 27. *they are sarful*, 518. *God records their wickedness*, 473

Winds, *a blessing*, 119, 120, 121

Woe, *what signifies*, 291. *Ministers must sometimes denounce woes* 294

Word of God *is Critical* 356

Worldly men *are industrious for the world* 465, 468

Y.

YOug men *cut off for sin*, 93

A Table of the Texts explained.

	Pages
Gen. 7. 17.	118
Deut. 24 19, 20.	388
Josh. 14. 12.	208
Judg. 9. 13	227
1 Sam. 4. 18.	815
1 Chron. 22. 8.	91
Job 1. ult.	346
23. 10.	134
23. 12.	487
Psal. 31. 15.	332
62. 1.	346
91. 10.	89
106. 7.	16
110. 3.	58
139. 7. to 13.	521, 222
Prov. 4. 14.	25
24 16.	505
25. 3.	129
Eccles. 11. 1, 2.	49, 50
Isa. 1. 5.	107
5. 1.	353
9. 17.	93
38. 1.	224
40. 15, 16, 17.	535, 537
46. 6.	321
Jer. 5. 2.	6, 7
5. 22.	532
5. 24.	71
16. 5.	330
Ezek. 42. ult.	205
Dan. 9. 23.	189
Micha 6. 8.	45
Hag. 2. 9.	565
Mat. 23. 37.	106
Luke 6. 30.	53
6. 38.	34
16. ult.	97
19. 8.	31
Rom. 5. 7.	34
12. 9.	210
1 Cor. 9. 19, 20.	6
2 Cor. 9. 10.	36, 37
Gal. 1. 6.	6
Colos. 3. 12.	48
1 Tim. 6. 19.	36
James 2. 19.	66
Philem. 2.	29, 30
2 Pet. 1. 19.	97
Revel. 14. 8.	329

Questions Resolved.

1 IN what Cases a man may seek to please men? p. 6
2 Whether Churches be holier than other places? p. 25
3 Whether good intentions bee a sufficient warrant for evil actions? p. 27, 28
4 Whether wandring Beggers may be releeved? p. 52
5 Whether Judicial-Astrology be unlawful? p. 72, 73
6 Whether a man may fly in time of Pestilence? p. 87
7 Whether a godly man may dye of the Plague? p. 89
8 Whether wee may use the name of Munday, Tuesday, &c. p. 168
9 Whether costly Oyntments may be used by any? p. 305, 306
10 When Musick is unlawful? p. 310, 311, &c.
11 Whether Relicks of Saints may be worshipped? p. 345
12 Whether we may rejoyce in the destruction of the wicked? p. 142
13 Whether Inclosures are lawful? p. 462
14 Whether VVeek-day Lectures be lawful? p. 466. & 497
15 VVhether men may swear by Idols? p. 503
16 VVhether Rulers may be called the Heads of a Land? p. 516

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